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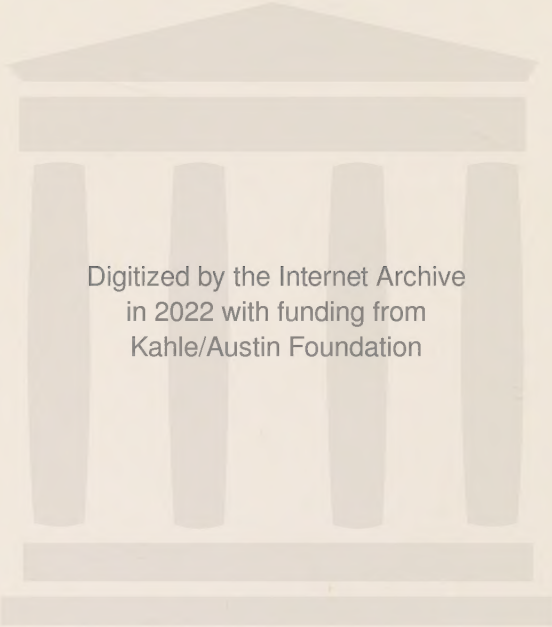
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The  
Study  
Bible



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# THE STUDY BIBLE

*Editor:* JOHN STIRLING

## JOB

*A Little Library  
of Exposition*

*with*

**New Studies**

*by*

*William McCallum*  
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## TO THE READER OF THE BOOK OF JOB

*This is one of the most companionable books of all literatures, quite apart from its particular appeal to those who are passing through a vale of tears or who are in danger of being torn from their moorings by a sea of trouble. To these, of course, it is as precious as Job's heaven-sent angel. But let the reader who is not overwhelmed by sore trials or the sudden changes of fortune take up the book, and he will find, in the company of this friendless man, the most engaging counsel and enlightenment. Wisdom will meet him in almost every sentence. The world will grow in wonder before his eyes, until the handiwork of God appears to form a mighty temple, "whose dome's the sky ; whose organ's thunder ; whose lamps the sun and moon supply." The hidden secrets of his own soul will he discover, and the hearts of those with whom he speaks will be laid bare. In heavenly places will he walk ; heavenly wisdom will he seek ; and under the shadow of the Almighty the heavenly vision will possess his soul.*

*From the saints and scholars who have companied with Job, and with him contemplated life's uneven way and the mysteries which veil the deep designs of God, the wayfaring man may, perhaps, gather encouragement to pursue his pilgrimage. To this end, words of fruitful meditation which contribute to the understanding of the Book of Job are presented here along with the sacred text to the reader of this little volume.*

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*An Appreciation*

THE BOOK OF JOB

BY

W. M. CLOW, D.D.

THE  
FIRST  
STUDY

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# THE BOOK OF JOB

By W. M. CLOW, D.D.

THE Book of Job is never read by a devout mind without awaking a sense of awe and reverence. It is never studied without evoking distinctive tributes to its intellectual genius and its spiritual splendour. All the masters of literature have expressed in impassioned apostrophes their wonder at its sublime imagery and their praise of its vivid and haunting words. But its real and abiding claim to regard, while it remains one of the supreme triumphs of the human mind and the record of an experience of an exalted spirit, is its revelation of the will of God dealing with the will of man. It is a great Scripture written by a nameless author who declared his unfaltering faith in God, in the midst of his anguish at the darkness of his fate, and was assured that, however misery might blight his life, justice and judgment were the habitation of God's throne. It is not a book merely for the thinkers who ponder the problems of the universe, or even for the inquirers who explore the mysteries of the unseen and the eternal. It faces, in its own intense and eager way, the issues of the sorrow and the suffering and the pain of all flesh. These calamities shadow every mind. They sit down beside every hearth-stone. They torture every loyal and loving heart. We shall not only lose the human interest of the book, but we shall miss its inspired message, if we allow any critical question to draw away our minds from the solemn issues it endeavours to resolve.

## I

The dramatic form of the book is universal in the record of tragedy. Tragedy is always the issue of a

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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conflict between good and evil, and only the dramatic form, with its presentation of character and its recurrent debate as to the meaning and purpose of the events of life, can clearly set forth the significance of the experience. It belongs to that order of great books which are the treasures of literature. Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Goethe's *Faust*, and, to add a more modern book, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, all stand beside the Book of Job. Each of them represents the genius of a race dealing with the high and serious problems of existence. Each of them faces at least one dominating problem. No one of them passes out into abounding light. Tennyson has set down the conclusion reached by one who had faced his desolating loss and sorrow, and yet could not pierce the veil that hung between him and the eternal purpose of God. So he writes :

He came at length  
To find a stronger faith his own ;  
And Power was with him in the night,  
Which makes the darkness and the light,  
And dwells not in the light alone,  
But in the darkness and the cloud.

*In Memoriam*, Stanza XCVI.

But the Book of Job stands apart even from these great expressions of mortal anguish. It is not merely the most splendid creation of Hebrew poetry. It is not only that in its pages the force, the beauty, and the depth of the Hebrew genius are seen at their best. It has an inbreathed inspiration, define it as we will, which not only energises its thought and is urgent in its words, but impresses the human spirit as the endowment of the Spirit of God.

It need not be thought that such a book was written in a succession of days, or even months, by a single

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## THE BOOK OF JOB

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hand. It makes no claim to be the work of an absorbed and solitary author. It may be that the prologue was written after the sayings of the speakers were set in order. As anyone who will read through the book at a single sitting will realise, the speeches of Elihu are in a different vein of thought and are set forth with a changed imagery and with an altered tone from those of the earlier and more intense declamations. But such possibilities do not affect either the integrity or the real unity of the book. It remains a closely inter-related whole. It has one subject, one hero, one message to proclaim, one fundamental truth to set in clear light. That is due to the inspiration of God's Spirit which breathes through every speaker's words. These are affected, as always, by the speaker's personality and knowledge, and by his attitude to God and the world. What we gain by this variety in unity is the fuller presentation of the problem, and the illuminating recital of the attempts at its solution, by different men living under diverse circumstances, yet all speaking, we may surely maintain, as moved by the Holy Spirit of God.

### II

When we turn to the pages of the book we realise that our first necessity is to visualise the man Job and his environment. Job is not an Israelite, as we would have expected in this Hebrew poem. He is an Edomite, who dwells in the Land of Uz, which lies across the Jordan. That is significant, for it means that the problem to be faced is universal with humanity. He may be described as a sheikh—a man of upstanding stature, bearded, with a dark skin, intense yet kindly eyes, clad in his long black robe, with his turban wound

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about his head. His moral portrait is drawn for us, as he sits in the shadow of his home at the evening hour, and looks out on the wide Arabian landscape, his face golden in the sunset, and the peace of God's benediction on his brow. He is no longer young. Grey hairs are here and there upon him. He has lived a fair, even-paced, and honoured life. He has prospered in the world, and is rich in public repute and in the esteem of his friends. His children have grown to manhood and to womanhood, and are loyal to the ideal of the home and to their fellowship with each other. At the base of all his thought and action there is a calm and convinced faith in one God who rules over all. To worship and to serve God had become the habit of his obedience and the spring of his peace and joy.

Suddenly, as a storm out of a clear sky, calamity smote him. The man of substance, with a very great household, was brought to poverty. Robbers carried off his herds of cattle. Fire fell upon his flocks of sheep. His camels were raided by the Chaldean desert thieves. In each calamity only one of his servants escaped to tell the tale. Even while one servant was speaking of these losses, another came to report a heavier sorrow. While his sons and daughters were feasting together in their happy fellowship, a fierce wind from the wilderness smote the house, and they were all buried beneath its ruins. Yet no word of reproach escaped his lips. He fell upon the ground in meek submission. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Then the final stroke fell. He was smitten, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, with a loathsome and foetid disease—a leprosy that made him a horror to men and an offence to himself. After the manner of the Oriental mourner,

he scraped himself with a potsherd, and sat down among ashes. His wife's faith and patience broke down, and she broke out in her bitter taunt, "Curse God, and die." But Job's great-souled constancy was unshaken. With a sad word of reproach to her as a thoughtless woman, he replied, "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" His three most intimate friends, moved by compassion, came to comfort him. He was so changed that they did not know him, and wept aloud in their grief. They sat down in silence, along with him, for his state was too grievous and perplexing for any word.

### III

Then, after the manner of the drama, the scene is changed. The writer's purpose is to reveal, under a presentation of the action in the heavenlies, the purposes and the forces behind this succession of losses and sorrows. It is described under the imagery of current religious thought. Only in terms of earthly customs can heavenly counsels be detailed in every age. We are shown God on His throne, and Satan His adversary, the author of evil and the prompter to it, appearing as the accuser of Job, the loyal believer. Satan is drawn as the evil spirit eager to contest the divine sovereignty, and unceasing in his endeavour to seduce human souls from their allegiance to God. God called on this evil spirit to consider Job, the upright and perfect man, as one who is well pleasing in His sight. On the instant there comes the scornful retort, "Doth Job serve God for naught?" That question touches the nerve of the problem. If earthly felicity waits on loyalty to God, it is no marvel, and not to Job's credit, that he is a righteous man. But, protests this

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adversary, let God put forth His hand, and at a touch wither Job's prosperity, and then the man would curse God to His face. God consents to put Job's uprightness to the test, and all the calamities follow in their almost overwhelming succession. Yet Job's faith endures and his loyalty does not yield. Neither in word nor deed does he falter. His "head is bloody but unbowed," we may say in a finer sense than these words may convey. He keeps a long silence under this dark providence, and, when he speaks at last, it is only to pour out the lamentations of a pitifully impoverished and broken man. In a soliloquy, listened to by his friends until they were searched to the depths of their being, Job declared that it had been better if he had not been born. Yet no word of reproach fell from his lips. Distraught, bewildered, overwhelmed, his faith in God endures.

This outpouring of an anguished heart sets the problem of the book in clear light and indicates its purpose. Job's conception of God was that securely held by the Hebrews. God was the creator of the universe and the framer of its laws. He held all men's lives in the hollow of His hand. The world which He had created was under the care of His providence. Not a sparrow fell to the ground without His knowledge. Even more definitely He was held to be the eternal justice, and the orderer of men's lives. The steps of a good man were ordered by the Lord, but His face was set against them that do evil. The cup of the righteous ran over with abundance, but the evil-doer was brought to poverty. So Job had lived, assuring himself that his prosperity was the sign and the reward of his uprightness. He did not wonder that pain and loss were the portion of the transgressor. Yet, when we

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## THE BOOK OF JOB

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recall the date of the writing of the Book of Job, we can realise that this once so confident belief had been shaken. The writer had seen God's people of Israel led captive by godless Babylon. The most tragic fact had been the destruction of the walls of the city and the burning of the temple. The most confounding event was the defiance of a foe who had mocked even at Jehovah's name. A devout Israelite might have found some light cast upon such a calamity, as the prophets did, by the thought that God was punishing the people for their backsliding. But there were some who had been carried off to Babylon even when they were loyal to the utmost call. There were captives who sat by the riverside, and would not sing the Lord's song in the strange land. The hand of the Lord seemed to go forth against His loyal people, and to give sovereignty and dominion to those who cursed His name. Both in the sphere of the national and of the individual life the once assured belief in God's constant care of the righteous had been shaken. So, in the Book of Job, it is made clear that Job's conception of God and the world had been mocked. His philosophy of life was proved to be inadequate to human experience. When Job at last broke silence he poured forth to his friends the plaint of a man who had passed into the darkness of his perplexity, but had not yet suffered the eclipse of his faith.

### IV

Then his friends broke their silence and a long day's high argument began. The reader stands, as Elihu stood, among the company, gathered, as is still the custom in the East, around such a conference. Job's three friends are confident that they can throw light

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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upon the problem. Eliphaz, the oldest of the three, is a man of sure knowledge and of ripe experience. Devout in life and secure in faith, with a theologian's familiarity with the Scriptures, he sets out to prove that prosperity is the sure blessing of the righteous, and that, therefore, Job is suffering for his evil doing. Job maintains his integrity, and recites his record of a life of truth and honour and gracious charity. Eliphaz is driven to declare, with more emphasis, that Job *must* have committed sins of which he is not aware. Bildad is a man of the world with a self-satisfied knowledge of men and affairs, and he supports the contention of Eliphaz, by quoting the homely proverbs of a practical man, who thinks that he takes a broad and fair view of life and its issues. Zophar is a moral philosopher, with a keen and logical mind, who brings a hard and cold method of reasoning to bear on the situation. He protests that so searchingly does the Divine eye look into men's hearts, so implacable is His judgment on the evil-doer, so inescapable is the penalty for every kind of unwisdom in life, that He sees evil to which men's dull eyes are blind, and that by His laws it is punished.

Job answers each of his three antagonists by meeting their somewhat varied presentations of God's sovereignty and power with a corresponding assertion of his integrity. The speakers begin to realise that their premises and conclusions do not meet and measure the height and the depth of the mystery. Eliphaz continues his exposition on his high level of appeal. But Bildad's third speech is merely an abrupt re-assertion. Zophar speaks only twice, for apparently he has no more to say. When they fall into silence, Job makes his defence with an increasing energy and a

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## THE BOOK OF JOB

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more solemn assurance. He declares that he will endure the test to which he has been put. When he has been tried in God's furnace, he will come forth proved to have been gold without alloy. In his reply to Bildad's worldly wisdom, Job lifts his eye from earth's perplexing sorrows, and from men's vain arguments regarding their justice, to make an appeal to a higher sphere of truth. He breaks out into that sublime confession which Handel's genius has set to immortal music, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth." His problem may never be solved while he lives. He may pass into death unhealed, unjustified, and unblessed. He may live out his years in clouds and darkness. But he shall yet be given a vision of God, and he will be vindicated by the just judge of all. When, at last, all his friends are silenced, Job retraces the broad lines of his defence, and stands before them, troubled in heart, but conscience clear.

At this point Elihu's long speech is set in the record. It is on a lower level of thought and feeling and even of courtesy, yet it touches the problem in a new way. Elihu is a man in his early prime, confident in himself and in his own view of life and its meaning. He has been listening, apparently, to the debate with some impatience. His speech suggests at times the accent and attitude of a superior person, who sees clearly into a situation, where others grope in the darkness. He is assured that Job has sinned, and that he ought not to be so confident as to his integrity. He maintains that God is just, and does not look with angry eye on those who keep His commandments. He does not willingly send men years of sorrow. But He has a purpose in all suffering to correct and to chasten, and He has made

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pain fulfil a remedial function in human life and history. His position is more in accord with modern thought than that of Job's three friends, but he remains convinced that Job's calamities are the judgment of God. His argument is summed up in his closing sentence : " Touching the Almighty, we cannot find Him out : He is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice : He will not afflict. Therefore men should fear Him ; all wise-ones of heart pay Him reverence."

### V

Then this poet-dramatist rises to the supreme height of his noble argument. As the evening shadows fell, a whirlwind broke over the company. Job was left alone. Out of the whirlwind God spoke to him. In a message of unapproached sublimity, pulsing with spiritual passion and awe-inspiring in its chastening rebuke, God proclaims the mystery and the majesty of His being and wisdom and power, the infinite length and breadth and height and depth of the working of His laws, the vastness of the scope of His purpose, and the settled strength of His will. He rebukes Job, but not for any failure in his faith or integrity. There is not even a trace of blame for Job's defence of his uprightness. The condemnation passed upon Job by the Divine Being is that he, in his merely human wisdom, had conceived that he could find out the will of God to perfection and resolve all the ways of God with man. Job hears the voice that tells him that he has not realised, with due reverence, that God's care is for universes far beyond Job's knowledge, and that God's purposes deal with issues which Job cannot understand. God's justice never falters, and God's

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will never fails in its righteousness, but His ways are past men's finding out. The source and secret both of Job's sin and of Job's despairing cries are his failure to understand the greatness of the mystery of the power and the purpose of God. As the Divine voice falls upon Job's ears, his eyes are opened, and the cry of the penitent is upon his lips. "Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me which I knew not." As he realises how dim and limited has been his thought of God, and as he lifts his eyes in the larger and clearer vision of the Eternal, he cries out, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee." He saw that the high and holy One must work with patience, submit to limitations, carry out His great purposes in spite of all hindrance of other wills, and often be so greatly misunderstood. As Job is given his vision of God, he sees how petty, how self-centred, how earthly has been his conception of God and of His will, and he makes his humble confession, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

### VI

The problem of suffering is not fully resolved in the Book of Job. That is confessed at its close by the picture drawn of Job's later days, when his former felicity was even more fully enjoyed. It is the writer's dramatic presentation of his conception of how, after due suffering, life may, and should, pass into sunshine again. There have been lives which have found light at eventide, in the worldly sense of the words. There are others, and these are many, from Moses, dying on Mount Nebo, with only the distant view of the

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Promised Land, to Jesus, dying on the cross, who fall asleep without a break in the clouds. The happy ending in the Book of Job is the writer's compromise with those inclined to protest against life's tragedy. The problem has a solution which this great-souled poet could not see. It is not the problem of pain in such a world as ours. That problem has vexed all the centuries, and foiled all their philosophies. Buddha, with nearly all the teachers of the Orient, and with the more shadowed minds of the Stoics, were so affected by the pain and mystery of suffering that they endeavoured to escape from life, either by seclusion or by suicide. But we have learned that pain, and tears, and death are the lot of all mankind, and that the wiser and more patient can see a purpose in them all. Nor is the problem that of deserved suffering. All men admit, with Job's counsellors, that the way of transgressors is hard, and that a man's sins will find him out. All men discern the great law of a just retribution. It was inscribed on the Greek consciousness by their doctrine of Nemesis, and Bishop Butler has set it securely in his avowal of the function of the conscience. Nor does the problem lie in the fact of undeserved suffering. In such a world as ours, with its times and seasons, with its inhabitants with tender flesh and pulsing blood, not to speak of its communal life, its human relationships, its hearts that love and care and desire, the innocent must suffer undeservedly not only with the guilty, but often for them. The focus point of the problem is reached where the writer of this book sets our eyes upon it. It is the suffering which is not only undeserved, but seems to come in a visitation of loss and pain, of desolating calamity and of almost unendurable misery, so that a human life is robbed of

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## THE BOOK OF JOB

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all gracious circumstance, all pure and sacred fellowship, even all peace and joy, until the whole round of the days is spent under a malevolent curse. It is not some single, thwarting, maiming, embittering loss, or pain, or misfortune. Had Job suffered only one unexpected and yet desolating sorrow, he might not have been able to think that the hand of the Lord had gone out against him. The problem becomes acute when someone living in a world over which God rules, humbly endeavouring to keep His commandments, rejoicing simply and gladly in the sunshine of the day and the sweet calm of the night, living out the round of life in innocent fellowship and gentle service, seems to be the focus of an overwhelming sorrow. The family brought to ruin by some public catastrophe, the simple household broken up by an impoverishing loss, the widow who is bereaved of five sons in a war, the man who in the discharge of the calls of his profession is infected by a foul, incurable, and disabling disease—any loss, or sorrow, or shame which makes men weary of life, even when they have sought to live in fellowship with God—that is the problem which we face in the Book of Job. There are more than many dream of whose quenched faith and broken heart are the signs and symbols of an overwhelming sorrow, and the cry that rings through their souls is akin to Job's lamentation, as they live out their burdened and bewildered days.

That problem has only one final solution. There is truth in the suggestion that all pain may be remedial, and is the constant spur to charity, and the open door of gracious service. There is a greater truth in the uplifting conclusion of the Book of Job that God's wisdom and power and purpose, and the word of His

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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action, are beyond our knowledge, and that the government of His universe has larger issues than our petty life can display. The human mind confronted with such an assured truth as that can only accept its suffering, confident that good will be the goal of ill. But the final truth is that suffering in a world like ours is inevitable, for pain is a co-relative of man's quick, sentient, and responsive being. Beyond that unalterable fact, suffering has a twofold purpose. In one aspect it is God's *tribulum*, which travels across the fields of life, crushing its clods and preparing the soil for the tender seed. That is how Paul resolved the mystery when he wrote, "We glory in tribulations, also : for tribulation worketh patience ; and patience, experience ; and experience, hope : and hope maketh not ashamed." But, again, the highest ministry of suffering is not to be merely the instrument of God's grace. It is the ennobling and enriching accompaniment of all who will serve God and their fellow-men in a world of evil. Anyone who will uplift his fellows from a mean, base life, who will lead, or follow, in any noble cause, who will spend himself and his energies and his pure passion in devotion to the interest of others, will find that he must make sacrifices which shall be costly indeed. At the lowest there will be sacrifices of ease, and pleasure, and profit, and personal ambition. At the highest they will be sacrifices of life, and what may seem to make life great. To accept suffering, to bear it with unflinching will, to choose it in an unselfish love, as Christ did in Gethsemane and on the cross, is to find the problem solved.

The problem of Job is so engrossing, its spiritual passion so moving, and the pathos of its suffering so poignant that we overlook the wonder of the style of

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## THE BOOK OF JOB

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the book. Yet the impassioned pages of the record allure and hold every discerning mind. It is hardly possible to over-estimate the influence of the English version of this unique Hebrew drama. Its scenes rise before us as on a stage. We can almost see the actors as they face each other. But only the student of literature realises the debt we owe to its strong, clear, haunting words. How solemn are its aphorisms! "Night, when deep sleep falleth on man." "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." How enriched is the current coin of our daily speech. "Great men are not always wise." "Hard as a nether millstone." "Escaped with the skin of my teeth." "The root of the matter is found in me." But ever and again the pealing music catches the heart. "I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." "The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." "I know that my Redeemer liveth." That word throbbed in Handel's heart as he poured out his sublime ascription to the Lord of Glory. The simplest worshipper feels their power and grace. The masters of English literature are overawed by their majesty. The man of faith is uplifted as they quicken his spirit until he almost forgets the dark problem of the book in a noble simplicity and solemn beauty of its sentences.

The wisdom of the Book of Job originates from Paradise.—DELITZSCH.

The pencil of the Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon.—BACON.

It rises like a pyramid in the history of literature, without a predecessor and without a rival.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

The Book of Job is full of spiritual mysteries. It may be called a Pentateuch beside the Pentateuch, and a Gospel before the Gospel.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Apart from all theories about it, one of the grandest things ever written by man. A noble book! All men's book! Such living likenesses were never since drawn. Sublime sorrow, sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody, as of the heart of manhood; so soft and great as the summer midnight; as the world with its seas and stars.—THOMAS CARLYLE.

One object of the book is to declare the testimony of nature to the Most High—to unite the leaves of the trees, the wings of its fowls, the eyes of its stars, in one act of adoration to Jehovah.—G. GILFILLAN.

The author grappled with the moral difficulties of his own time like a giant, and left upon record some lessons concerning suffering and its significance, which neither the world nor the Church has fully learned yet.

W. T. DAVIDSON.

Nowhere in the whole course of human literature, sacred or profane, shall we find the inexorable problems of life's painful riddles more keenly realised, more urgently pressed home, more freshly pictured, and, last not least, more tenderly listened to by a divine Teacher.—G. G. BRADLEY.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS

Drawn from many  
sources to illustrate  
the great Texts and  
Teaching of the Book

*THERE ARE MANY* interpreters of Job, as the reader of the following pages will discover. Some hold that, throughout his trial, Job's righteousness failed not, and that his repentance at the end was but the natural confession of an upright man in the presence of God ; others consider that his speeches betray a taint of sin, which his sufferings were designed to remove. Beyond this distinction, it is not possible and perhaps it is not necessary to detail further the different interpretations of Job's sufferings and the problem of the book, since they are indicated by the various quotations which make up this study. It should, however, be borne in mind when reading these passages that widely different views may be represented by the extracts, which have been selected to illustrate or interpret the meaning of the chosen text. Only by such a comparison of thought could the many-sidedness of Job's problem be displayed and the rich suggestiveness of the study of the book be revealed.

Of special interest to the Western world are the quotations from the thirty-five books on "*The Morals of Job*," as this commentary by GREGORY THE GREAT was commonly called. He it was who saw the Anglo-Saxon boys in the Roman slave-market and sent the missionary Augustine to Britain. He had intended to undertake the mission himself, while he was yet a monk, and was three days on the journey when he was recalled, largely because the citizens of Rome, by whom he was beloved, pressed for his return. His humility was as great as his charity. It was with difficulty that he could be persuaded to accept the honours the Church and the people sought to confer upon him. Such virtues grace his meditations and temper his teaching, which was drawn mainly from the writings of Augustine, Ambrose, and Jerome.

Secular literature provides some striking sentences on certain of the points raised by Job and his friends. Where these are given they follow, as a rule, the quotations from the sacred writers.

# JOB

## THE PROLOGUE

*There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job ; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*

*Job I. 1.*

WHO knows not that Uz is a land of the Gentiles? Let us be told then where he dwelt, that this circumstance may be reckoned to his praise, that he was good among bad men ; for it is no very great

praise to be good in company with the good, but to be good with the bad ; for as it is a greater offence not to be good among good men, so it is immeasurably high testimony for anyone to have shown himself good among the wicked.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

According to some, Job obtained this name, signifying “ repentance,” from an Arabic word, which means, “ to return ”—viz. to God, as he did at the close of life. But others think its origin is rather to be traced to a Hebrew word, denoting “ enmity,” and the name, viewed in that light, denotes “ one treated as an enemy,” the “ assailed or persecuted one ”—the Emir of Uz being so called by the people of the surrounding country, on account of his severe trials.—R. JAMIESON.

Coverdale translates, “ an innocent and virtuous man, such as feared God and eschewed evil,” and it is from this translation that we retain the word “ eschewed,” from the old French, which signifies “ to avoid.”—A. CLARKE.

Job so lived with men as if God saw him, and so spake with God as if men overheard him.—J. TRAPP.

The Ancient Church appointed the Book of Job to be read at seasons of meditation on the Passion of Christ. It saw in Job a type of the only undeserving sufferer.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Job was a Christian long before Christ.—JULIAN.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### SATAN

*And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job?*

*Job I. 7-8.*

THE dialogue here commenced expresses the *mind* of the speakers, and not any familiar conversation.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

Satan is represented as interrogated whence he came, and what he had been doing. And his answer seems to have implied an arrogant claim to be “the god and prince of this world”; and, in the spirit of pride and self-vindication, he avowed that he had been traversing his dominions, without exceeding the bounds assigned him. It also denoted his restless malice, and unwearied endeavours to do mischief.—T. SCOTT.

How is it that it is never said to the elect angels when they come, “Whence come ye?” while Satan is questioned whence he comes? For assuredly we never ask, but what we do not know; but God’s not knowing is His condemning. When God speaks to the devil He both reprehends his unjust ways, and urges against him the righteousness of His saints. Here it is to be remarked that the devil did not first beg the blessed Job of the Lord, but the Lord commended him to the contempt of the devil; and unless He had known that he would continue in his uprightness He would not assuredly have undertaken for him.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

To make him sensible that he was not an absolute prince the Lord called Satan to Him and demanded an account of where he had been and what he had been doing.—BP. PATRICK.

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## THE PROLOGUE

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Satan is represented as transacting his own affairs without the knowledge or approbation of God.

COCCEIUS.

There lies in these words an intimation that Satan's ways are not God's ways ; that it is his wont to roam about, a being without stability, malicious and intent upon evil ; that there is a reason in his case why God should inquire after his crooked and crafty ways, and compel him to give an account of his restless and arbitrary movements.—O. ZÖCKLER.

As idle, and besides that, unquiet, seeking always to do evil. " Walking "—an impudent dissimulation, as if the earth were a place for him to take his pleasure, pastime, and full liberty in, whereas it is the place of his banishment.—DIODATI.

It is important to remark the emphatic stress laid on Satan's subordinate position, in the Book of Job, on the absence of all but delegated power, of all terror, and all grandeur in his character. He comes among the " sons of God " to present himself before the Lord ; his malice and envy are permitted to have scope, in accusation or in action, only for God's own purposes ; and it is especially remarkable that no power of spiritual influence, but only a power over outward circumstance, is attributed to him. All this is widely different from the revelations of the New Testament.—A. BARRY.

There was already patience in Job, which God knew, and to which He bore witness ; but it became known unto men by test of trial ; and what lay hid within was not produced, but shown, by the things that were brought on him from without. How many are there of the same virtue of mind, unto whom trial is wanting, whereby what is within, in the sight of God, may go forth also into the sight of men.—AUGUSTINE.

### THE CHALLENGE

*Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side?*

*Job I. 9-10.*

THE question, Does Job serve God for nought? is the problem of the book.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

Genuine love loves God for His own sake; it is a relation of person to person, without any actual stipulation or claim.

DELITZSCH.

It is an argument of a most malignant spirit, when a man's actions are fair, then to accuse his intentions. The devil had nothing to say against the actions of Job, but goes down into his heart, and accuses his intentions.—CARYL.

The devil could find never a gap, make never a breach. A saint goes always under a double guard, the power of God without him, and the peace of God within him.—J. TRAPP.

Hedged him on every side without leaving a gap through which harm might enter.—DILLMANN.

Among the epithets which the Greek poets affix to the name of the supreme god Zeus, no one is more suggestive of certain scriptural ideas than that of "the god of the household, or, of the enclosure." This epithet is a gem from the ancient mine of Grecian mythology, for He who is the God of the Universe is at the same time the God of His people in a closer sense than was ever dreamed by the Greeks. God does not deny what Satan says, although for His own transcending reasons He gives him permission to enter that sacred enclosure and lay it waste for a season.

T. LEWIS.

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## THE PROLOGUE

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### THE DECREE

*And the Lord said unto Satan,  
Behold, all that he hath is in  
thy power ; only upon him-  
self put not forth thine hand.*

*Job I. 12.*

HERE God in appearance condescendeth to the devil's desires. But we must know that God's end in this large grant was not to gratify the devil, but to glorify Him-

self by making Satan the instrument of his own shame and infamy.—J. TRAPP.

We should mark in the Lord's words the dispensations of heavenly pity, how He lets our enemy go, and keeps him in ; how He looses, and yet bridles him. He allows him some things for temptation, but withholds him from others. His substance He delivers over, but still He protects his person, which notwithstanding after a while He designs to give over to the tempter ; yet He does not loose the enemy to everything at once, lest He should crush His own subject by striking him on every side. For whenever many evils betide the elect, by the wonderful graciousness of the Creator they are dealt out by seasons, that what by coming all together would destroy, may when divided be borne up against.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

The instrumentality through which Satan is allowed to work is partly physical (the fire and the wind), partly human (the Sabeans and Chaldeans), representing the two different agencies of God's providence.

A. BARRY.

God sets bounds to the afflictions of His people. He limits how far every affliction shall go, and how far every instrument shall prevail.—CARYL.

It is matter of comfort that God hath the devil in a chain.—HENRY.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### THE FIRST TRIAL

*The Lord gave, and the Lord  
hath taken away ; blessed  
be the name of the Lord.*

*Job I. 21.*

IT is in a field of battle that we stand every day and receive the arrows of Satan's temptations. But we ourselves too send our javelins against him, if when pierced with woes we answer humbly. Thus Job, when stricken with the loss of his substance and with the death of his children, forasmuch as he turned the force of his anguish into praise of his Creator, by his humility struck down the enemy in his pride, and by his patience laid low the cruel one. Let us never imagine that Job received wounds and yet inflicted none. For whatever words of patience he gave forth to the praise of God, when he was stricken, he, as it were, hurled so many darts into the breast of his adversary, and inflicted much sorer wounds than he underwent.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

The things we have are not properly given, but lent. When God lent us the use of them, He did not mean to forgo the property too : and therefore they are His goods still, and He may require them at our hands, or take them from us when He will and dispose of them when He pleases. Whensoever He shall think good to call in His debts, it is our part to return them, not with patience only, but with thankfulness, that He hath suffered us to enjoy them so long ; and certainly without the least grudging or repining that we may not hold them any longer.—BP. SANDERSON.

As if he should say, He hath taken away all, let Him take all, send me away naked, only let me keep Him. What shall I lack if I have God ? or what is the good of all else to me, if I have not God ?—AUGUSTINE.

### THE SECOND TRIAL

*And the Lord said unto Satan,  
Behold, he is in thine hand ;  
only spare his life.*

*Job II. 6.*

GOD gave more than the devil asked ; for the latter asked, " Put forth Thine hand and touch him," but God said not thus, but " I deliver him unto thee." For just as in the contests the combatants that are vigorous, and in high condition of body, are not so well discerned, when they are enwrappt all round with garments soaked in oil ; but when casting these aside, they are brought forth unclothed into the arena ; then above all they strike the spectators on every side with astonishment at the proportion of their limbs, there being no longer anything to conceal them ; so also was it with Job. When he was enveloped in all that wealth, it was not visible to the many what a noble man he was. But when, like the wrestler, that strips off his garment, he threw it aside, and came naked to the conflicts of piety, thus unclothed, he astonished all who saw him, so that not only those who were present but the very theatre of angels shouted at beholding his fortitude of soul, and applauded him as he won his crown. " I am sure," saith God, " of this wrestler ; therefore I do not forbid thee to impose on him whatever struggles thou desirest." But as those who are well skilled in the sports of the palæstra, and have reason to rely on their art and bodily strength, often do not seize their antagonists upright, nor take an equal advantage, but suffer them to take them by the middle, that they may make a more splendid contest ; so also God gave permission to the devil to take this saint by the waist, that when he had overcome, his crown might be so much the more glorious.—CHRYSOSTOM.

### JOB'S WIFE

*Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity ? renounce God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What ? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil ? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.*

*Job II. 9-10.*

THE old adversary is wont to tempt mankind in two ways : viz. so as either to break the hearts of the steadfast by tribulation, or to melt them by persuasion. Again he has recourse to his arts of ancient contrivance, and because he knows by what means Adam is prone to be deceived, he has recourse to Eve. He saw Job unconquered in a kind of fortress

of virtues. The adversary then seeks by what steps he may mount up to this well-fenced fortress, and seizes the mind of the wife which was the ladder to the husband. But he could do nothing by this artifice.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

The Greek translators, astonished, perhaps, that an angry woman should express herself so briefly on such an occasion, had the hardihood to expand her words into a much longer speech. Some other versions have this passage ; but it is not of the least authority, not being found in any Hebrew copy. It is, however, curious, as showing the view which was at a very early period taken by learned Jews of the *purport* of her words, and of the condition to which Job was reduced. " After much time had passed his wife said unto him, How long wilt thou persist, saying, Behold, I will wait a little longer in expectation of my deliverance ? Behold, thy memorial is blotted out of the earth ; even the sons and daughters whom I have brought forth. Even

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## THE PROLOGUE

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thou thyself sittest among loathsome worms, abiding all night in the open air ; while I, a drudge and a wanderer from house to house and from place to place, long for the setting of the sun that I may rest from the toils and sorrows I now endure. Utter some word against the Lord, and die.”—KITTO.

A great deal of prudence ought to be exercised towards woman, for she may bring about much evil without knowing it. She is an incomprehensible danger, capable of all manner of devotion and of all kinds of treason ; she is at once the delight and terror of man.—AMIEL.

Job does not say to his wife, Thou art a foolish woman ; but, Thou speakest as if thou didst belong to that class ; in other words, Thou art become unlike thyself.—HENGSTENBERG.

His soul was not supplanted : the just man did not blaspheme ; but even gave thanks.—CHRYSOSTOM.

The Targum and many of the Jewish writers observe that he sinned in his heart, but not with his lips ; but this is not to be concluded from what is here said, though it is possible there might be some risings of corruption in his heart, which, by the grace of God that prevailed in him, were kept under and restrained from breaking out.—GILL.

Job was wiser in the ashes than Adam had been in Paradise.—AUGUSTINE.

The pious and wise should not be angry at God in adversity.—ÆSCHYLUS.

Whatever misfortunes afflict you by the will of the gods, bear your fate patiently, and submit without anger.—PYTHAGORAS.

God does not bring up a good man in the midst of luxuries.—SENECA.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### JOB'S FRIENDS

*Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place ; . . . and they made an appointment together to come to bemoan him and to comfort him.*

*Job II. 11.*

ELIPHAZ was the poet and spiritual man who sees visions and dreams dreams ; Bildad was the man who rested on authority and appealed to tradition ; Zophar was the man of worldly wisdom and common sense.

S. LEATHES.

Their visit, which was undertaken with the most loving intent, became, without their purposing it, a severe trial of Job's feelings—a trial which at length affected him more powerfully and became more insupportable to him than all former ones.—O. ZÖCKLER.

The temptation of Job becomes efficient by means of his friends.—VILMAR.

No one can doubt the divine wisdom in using the friends to bring Job into fuller knowledge. The violence of human dialectic and the many-sidedness of several minds presented before Job in much greater completeness all the phases of his relation to heaven than could have been accomplished by the mere workings of his own mind.—A. B. DAVIDSON.

I knew consolation would be impertinent, and therefore contented myself to sit by him, and condole with him in silence.—R. STEELE.

The presence of friends is agreeable both in prosperity and adversity ; for those who are in pain feel lightened when their friends grieve with them.

ARISTOTLE.

## THE CURSE

### JOB'S LAMENT

*After this opened Job his  
mouth, and cursed his day.  
And Job answered and said :  
Let the day perish wherein  
I was born . . .*

*Job III. 1-3.*

**B**BETTER if he had kept his mouth closed : either be silent, saith the Greek proverb, or else say something that is better than silence.

J. TRAPP.

Job's utterances are not such as Satan had expected to extort from him. He did not curse God, but spoke evil of the day of his birth.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

If a man, on account of his sufferings, wishes not to have been born, he has lost his confidence that God designs his highest good, even in his severest suffering ; and this want of confidence is sin. There is, however, a great difference between a man who has in general no trust in God, and in whom suffering only makes this manifest in a terrible manner, and the man with whom trust in God is a habit of his soul, which is only momentarily repressed or paralysed. It is, moreover, not the greatness of the affliction in itself which shakes his sincere trust in God, but an apparent change of disposition on the part of God, which seems to be at work in the affliction. The sufferer considers himself as forsaken and rejected of God ; therefore he sinks into despair ; and in this despair expression is given to the profound truth, that it is better never to have been born, than to be rejected by God.—DELITZSCH.

He had always had in remembrance the uncertainty and instability of earthly things, and yet he had been overtaken by a calamity that mocked his carefulness and exceeded his apprehensions.—S. LEATHES.

Opening one's mouth is a common phrase in

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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Scripture for speaking, and arose from the reserved habit of Oriental people, who speak but seldom, and that sententiously. With regard to the subject of his discourse, it bore a reference to the ancient custom of people regarding some days as fortunate and others unfortunate, in consequence of these having been distinguished in their experience by the occurrence of prosperous or calamitous events. Mournful dirges were usually sung on the unfortunate days, with loud wailings, and a total abstinence from all mirth or pleasure.—R. JAMIESON.

Behold, my birthday comes round at its appointed time ; but to no purpose, for of what use was it to me to be born ? Why didst thou come, cruelly bringing with thee an additional year of misery to the exile ? If thou hadst had any care of me, in that place where first I was born an infant, thou wouldst have tried to be my last day as well as my first.—OVID.

Ye have heard of the patience of Job, saith the Apostle. So we have, and of his impatience too. We admired that a man could be so patient in chapters one and two, but we are amazed that a good man should be so impatient as he is in this chapter. He ungratefully quarrels with life, and is angry that it was not taken from him as soon as it was given. Surely Satan was mistaken in Job when he applied that maxim to him, “ All that a man hath will he give for his life ” ; for never any man valued life at a lower rate than he did. It is good to make the best of afflictions, but it is not good to make the worst of mercies. How much soever life is embittered, it is contradicting the common sense and sentiments of mankind to part with it. When the old man in the fable, being tired with his burden, threw it down with discontent, and called for death,

and death came to him and asked what he would have with him, he then answered, Nothing, but help me up with my burden. But Job passionately applauds death and the grave, and seems hugely in love with them. He thinks himself in particular hardly dealt with, and that which makes his grief now the more grievous is that he is not conscious of any great degree of negligence or security in the day of his prosperity which might provoke God thus to chastise him. He knew not wherefore God contended with him. Now this consideration, instead of aggravating his grief, might rather have served to alleviate it, for nothing will make trouble easy so much as the testimony of our conscience.—HENRY.

The thought of his innocence was the only comfort which Job had ; the devil had deprived him of all else, and his friends strive to deprive him of this.

BP. WILSON.

A new trial awaits Job, one in which he cannot stand aloof from men, and go through in the secrecy of his own soul. His conflict this time is with men, with the best and most religious of men, and with the loftiest creed of his time. It does not appear what place Satan holds in this conflict ; his name disappears from the book. We cannot say whether he silently acknowledged himself baffled and retired. This new trial seems not of his contriving, but of God's, who will by this means bring Job to fuller knowledge of Himself, that he may be at peace. We prefer to have done with the devil, and view the remaining portion of Job's exercise as between him and God alone. Much of the poem is monologue ; the objections of the friends are but used by God as spurs to stimulate the soul to exercise itself on Him.—A. B. DAVIDSON.

# THE FIRST DEBATE

## ELIPHAZ SPEAKS

*Then answered Eliphaz . . .  
Job IV. 1.*

THE most dignified, calm,  
and considerate of Job's  
three friends.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

He, the oldest and most illustrious, the leader and spokesman, speaks here in great brilliance. What a fullness in the argument, which at first sight seems unanswerable ! What poetic beauty irradiates it all ! One might say that as an artistic discourse this part is the completest in the whole book.—SCHLOTTMANN.

He is *apparently* right in everything ; and it is certainly with full conscious purpose that the poet introduces him into the discussion with such a discourse ; for only thus could a real entanglement arise with Job.—DILLMANN.

That which injures the religious and moral value of the speech of Eliphaz is a series of defects which lead us to infer in the speaker a defective character rather than an erroneous theory. The discourse with all its beauty and truth is heartless and cold.—LANGE.

Eliphaz, who is the first of the friends to speak, though he came with pity to console, yet in that he departs from meekness of speech is ignorant of the rules of consoling ; and while he neglects the guarding of his lips he is guilty of excess, even to offering insult to the afflicted man. Many things that are said are admirable, were they not spoken against the afflicted condition of the holy man. In themselves they are great, but because they aim to pierce that righteous person that greatness loses its weight. It is in vain that the javelin is sent to strike the hard stones. Though the sayings of Job's friends be very forcible in some

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## THE FIRST DEBATE

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points, yet since they strike the saint's well-fenced life, they turn back all the point of their sharpness.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

The question in dispute is whether Job is an honest man or not. The same question that was in dispute between God and Satan in the first two chapters. Satan had yielded it, and durst not pretend that Job's cursing of his day was a constructive cursing of his God ; he cannot deny but that Job still holds fast his integrity. But Job's friends will need have it that if Job were an honest man he would not have been thus sorely and tediously afflicted, and therefore urge him to confess himself a hypocrite in the profession he had made of religion.—HENRY.

As regards the theological contents of this first discourse of Eliphaz, there is scarcely anything in it which contradicts the true Old Testament religion. He speaks like a pious man belonging to Jehovah's commonwealth, but like one who speaks not the whole truth. He is the champion of a party-doctrine, which later is condemned by God as one-sided and erroneous. But that which injures the religious and moral value of his speech more than its one-sided doctrinal features, which emerge into but slight prominence, is a series of defects which lead us to infer in the speaker a defective character rather than an erroneous theory. It exhibits not a trace of genuine sympathy with the misery which has overwhelmed the unhappy sufferer. It takes no account whatever of the former purity of Job's life, and of his uncomplaining patience. Worst of all, it suggests the existence of some defect at the back of his life more dreadful than the speaker dare name. Which things naturally incite Job to the passionate reply which he makes.—O. ZÖCKLER.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### IF PIOUS, THEN PROSPEROUS

*Remember, I pray thee, who  
ever perished, being innocent ?  
Or where were the upright  
cut off ?*

*Job IV. 7.*

**I**F we understand it of a final and eternal destruction, his principle is true ; none that are innocent and righteous perish for ever. But if we understand it of any temporal calamity, his principle is not true. Did not righteous Abel perish, being innocent ?—HENRY.

Although it be true in general that the innocent never perish, and that God afflicts men for their sins, yet Eliphaz was to blame for concluding from thence that Job's virtue had not been sincere.

OSTERVALD.

No man knows how the heart of God stands toward him by His hand. His hand of mercy may be toward a man when His heart may be against that man, as you see in the case of Saul and others. And the hand of God may be set against a man when the heart of God is dearly set upon him, as you may see in Job and Ephraim. No man knows either love or hatred by outward mercy or misery ; for all things come alike to all, to the righteous and the unrighteous, to the good and to the bad, to the clean and to the unclean. The sun of prosperity shines as well upon brambles of the wilderness as fruit-trees of the orchard ; the snow and hail of adversity light upon the best garden as well as upon the dunghill or the wild waste. Health, wealth, honours, crosses, sicknesses, losses, are cast upon both good men and bad men.—BROOKS.

We should rest in the firm belief that the Judge of all the earth will do right ; and not judge merely from outward appearances.—R. JAMIESON.

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## THE FIRST DEBATE

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### WHENCE COMETH AFFLICTION ?

*For affliction cometh not forth  
of the dust,*

*Neither doth trouble spring  
out of the ground ;*

*But man is born unto trouble,  
As the sparks fly upward.*

*Job V. 6-7.*

THE misery which follows sin is not from the material constitution of things, but from an internal law of man's own existence, a law as real and necessary as that which compels the sparks to fly upward.—L. J. EVANS.

Man is born to sin, and so consequently to trouble ; for sin usually endeth tragically and troublesomely. Hence the same word, both here and in the former verse, signifies both sin and sorrow ; and man, by reason of his birth-blot, hath a birthright to them both.

J. TRAPP.

Man is born unto misery, like as the bird is born to fly.—COVERDALE.

Though man, wicked in nature, undertaketh and performeth many things, yet are they not like vain and unfruitful sparks out of a furnace ?

DIODATI.

The tendency of man is to suffer trouble, as that of fiery natures is to fly upwards.—F. C. COOK.

It behoveth him that is no more than a man to expect all sorts of troubles.—XENOPHON.

It is fit for man to hope the best ; but bravely to bear the worst, as that which is common to all mankind.

DEMOSTHENES.

He that remembereth that he is a man will not be discontented at trouble.—ISOCRATES.

There is no such thing as chance ; and what seems to us merest accident springs from the deepest source of destiny.—SCHILLER.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered . . .*

*Job VI. 1.*

**E**LIPHAZ had laid down the principle, which was held to be incontrovertible, and of universal application: where there is suffering there must be sin; if borne patiently, the suffering may pass away, the sin, if confessed, may be pardoned; but rebellious struggles, or a refusal to admit the justice of the infliction, can but end in destruction.—F. C. COOK.

Job replies with the despair of a man who has been baulked of sympathy when he hoped to find it. We cannot trace, nor must we expect to find, the formal reply of a logical argument. Eliphaz, he feels, has so misjudged his case that he is neither worthy of a direct reply nor susceptible of one. It is enough for him to reiterate his complaint, and long for one who can enter into it.—S. LEATHES.

He maintains that his grief was not equal to the cause of it, and he renews his wishes of death, which they, who felt nothing to make them weary of life, might continue to wonder at. They who had pretended to be friends had offered this rude reproof without so much as one compassionate word, or the least syllable of consolation. He begs them to weigh the cause of his complaint a little better before they pass any further judgment upon it.—BP. PATRICK.

Oftentimes the tortures of speech assail us worse than any pains. The sayings of his friends in talk galled him sorer than scourges.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

There are calumnies against which even innocence loses courage.—NAPOLEON.

Seldom do we find the sympathy we want.

GOETHE.

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## THE FIRST DEBATE

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### TRUE FRIENDS

*To him that is ready to faint  
kindness should be shewed  
from his friend ;*

*Even to him that forsaketh  
the fear of the Almighty.*

*Job VI. 14.*

TO one whose inner life is dissolving, whose faith is giving way, and who in that fearful dissolution is in danger of losing hold on God, to him surely sympathy from friends is meet.—EWALD.

The meaning may be : They who treat a friend cruelly will easily cast off the fear of God.—GROTIUS.

Or, the inconsiderate or unfeeling friend forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.—A. B. DAVIDSON.

Who else is here denoted by the name of friend but every neighbour, who is united to us in a faithful attachment, having received from us good service in this present time, effectually aids us toward attaining hereafter the eternal country. For because there are two precepts of charity, namely, the love of God and the love of our neighbour ; by the love of God the love of our neighbour is brought into being, and by the love of our neighbour the love of God is fostered. He who cares not to love God knows not how to love his neighbour, and we advance more perfectly in the love of God, if in the bosom of this love we first be suckled with the milk of love towards our neighbour. Oftentimes Almighty God, to make known how far anyone is from the love of Him and of his neighbour, puts down some by strokes and sets up others by successes. The loss of prosperity particularly puts to the test the force of the affection, because he who condemns his neighbour in his adversity is clearly convicted never to have loved him in his prosperity.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### THE THREAD OF LIFE

*My days are swifter than a  
weaver's shuttle,  
And are spent without hope.*

*Job VII. 6.*

FINISHED for want of a thread.—E. SMITH.

In almost every nation the whole of human existence has been compared to a web ; and the principle of life, through the continual succession of moments, hours, days, weeks, months, and years, to a thread woven through that web. Hence arose the fable of the Fates. They were the daughters of *Erebus* and *Nox*, darkness and night ; and were three in number, and named *Clotho*, *Lachesis*, and *Atropos*. *Clotho* held the distaff ; *Lachesis* spun off the thread ; and *Atropos* cut it off with her scissors, when it was determined that life should end. *Job* represents the thread of his life as being spun out with great rapidity and tenuity, and about to be cut off.—A. CLARKE.

The Fates, when they this happy thread have spun,  
Shall bless the sacred clue, and bid it smoothly run.

DRYDEN.

Praise be to God, who hath woven the web of human affairs in the loom of His will and of His wisdom, and hath made waves of times and of seasons to flow from the fountain of His providence into the ocean of His power.—TEEMOUR NAMEH.

It seems to me that I am hanging by a thread over the fathomless abyss of destiny.—AMIEL.

Though we seem grieved at the shortness of life in general, we are ever wishing every period of it at an end.—ADDISON.

Hope is necessary in every condition. Without this comfort, the miseries of poverty, of sickness, of captivity would be insupportable.—S. JOHNSON.

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## THE FIRST DEBATE

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### WHAT IS MAN ?

*What is man, that thou  
shouldst magnify him,  
And that thou shouldst set  
thine heart upon him,  
And that thou shouldst visit  
him every morning,  
And try him every moment ?  
Job VII. 17-18.*

WHY shouldst thou break  
a fly upon the wheel ?

BP. WORDSWORTH.

David's "What is man, that  
Thou shouldst think of him  
to bless him ?" is turned into,  
"What is man, that Thou  
shouldst think of him to curse  
him ?"—A. B. DAVIDSON.

Is mortal man so considerable, that Thou shouldst honour him so much as to contend with him, and set Thyself against him ? That Thou shouldst send new afflictions upon him every morning ; nay, try his strength and courage every moment.—BP. PATRICK.

Continuing his speech, ver. 20, Job says : " Lord, if Thou wilt say I have sinned, I will say so, too ; but wilt Thou take advantage thereby to destroy me, Thou who art the Preserver of men ?"—E. LEIGH.

It is not Job's peculiar sin that he thinks God has changed to an enemy against him ; that is the view that comes from his vision being beclouded by his conflict. Neither does his sin consist in his inquiries. But the sin is that he hangs on to these doubting questions until he attributes apparent mercilessness and injustice to God.—O. ZÖCKLER.

Job enters into direct expostulation with God. He still keeps clear from the sin of renouncing God ; so far the temptation completely fails ; but he incurs the very serious reproach of arraigning His government. This distinction must be borne in mind throughout.

F. C. COOK.

### BILDAD SPEAKS

*Then answered Bildad . . .*

*Job VIII. 1.*

**B**ILDAD follows in the train of Eliphaz, but with more violent declaration, less argument, and keener invective. His address is abrupt and untender. In his very first speech he cruelly attributes the death of Job's children to their own transgressions; and loudly calls on Job to repent of his supposed crimes.—F. W. FARRAR.

There is sound general truth in Bildad's affirmation respecting the dealings of God with the upright and evil, but the application of this general truth to Job in particular is his fault, and is unauthorised by anything he knew or could charitably conjecture.—CHALMERS.

Bildad, without much originality or independence of character, reposes upon the wise saws of antiquity to support his assertions.—MCCLINTOCK.

He wishes to be very orthodox in his assertions, to base his statements upon authority, and appeals to the experience of ages long gone by to attest the truth of what he says. That which is emphatically the problem of the Book of Job was the great practical problem of the Old World. It is a problem which not seldom weighs upon our own hearts, even in the light of the Gospel, though, of course, since the revelation of the Cross of Christ this problem has once for all been practically solved. What is so conspicuous in these speeches of Job's friends is their total want of refinement and delicacy of feeling. They blurt out, without the slightest compunction, the most unscrupulous charges, and they cast the most reckless insinuations against him.—S. LEATHES.

### INQUIRE OF THE PAST

*Inquire, I pray thee, of the  
former age,  
And apply thyself to that  
which their fathers have  
searched out.*

*Job VIII. 8.*

JOB had said, "Teach me," and Bildad appeals to the fathers to show that his view was supported by the testimony of all former generations, especially of the world's grey fathers, who, having had

a long life of observation and experience, left the results recorded in poetical proverbs traditionally preserved for the instruction of posterity. The verses which follow this expression are supposed to be a quotation from a very ancient poem, the admission of which into the sacred history has made it a portion of Holy Writ.

R. JAMIESON.

Antiquity is of no small authority. That is truest which is ancientest; the more ancient the witnesses are the more creditable, because less corrupt. This is the old commandment, saith St. John, which was from the beginning.—J. TRAPP.

It is a very important point which Bildad here makes. There is no surer way of falling into error than for one individual or one age wilfully and proudly to cut loose from its connection with the whole, and to resolve to be wise independently and alone. But something more is required than simply a correct understanding of the past. The truth transmitted by historic tradition always has aspects which have not yet been completely developed.—HENGSTENBERG.

If we do not take to our aid the foregone studies of men reputed intelligent and learned, we shall be always beginners.—BURKE.

### JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered and said,  
Of a truth I know that it is so :  
But how can man be just with  
God ?*

*Job IX. 1-2.*

**J**OB treads under foot the prosecution of his own defence.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

In his former discourse

Job had directed one section against his friends, but here he says nothing formally against them ; he soliloquises as it were in their hearing, leaving them to infer whither their assaults are driving him.—DILLMANN.

The speech of Bildad, with its charges of irreligion and taunting irony, overpowered the patience of Job, and betray him into inconsistencies ; at one time he acknowledges the Divine justice, and his own submission to its decrees ; at another he seems to arraign it.—DR. HALES.

The fundamental thought around which all the discussions of this new discourse of Job resolve, is that of absolute power in God, and of that power working in an arbitrary manner, entirely regardless of all human right and innocence. Instead of the God of absolute justice, whom the friends had held up before him and defended, he forms for himself a God of absolute power, who rules and directs not according to objective standards of right, but according to the promptings of an arbitrary will, subject to no restraint. Instead of dwelling as he had formerly done on the remembrance of the manifold goodness which he had experienced from God, he writhes under the crushing spectre into which his perverted imagination had transformed the only just and holy God, and finally relapses into a tone of the deepest despair.—O. ZÖCKLER.

### THE ALMIGHTY GOD

*Which removeth the mountains, and they know it not,  
When he overturneth them in his anger.*

*Which shaketh the earth out of her place,  
And the pillars thereof tremble.*

*Which commandeth the sun,  
and it riseth not ;*

*And sealeth up the stars.*

*Which alone stretcheth out the heavens,*

*And treadeth upon the waves of the sea.*

*Which maketh the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades,*

*And the chambers of the south.*

*Which doeth great things past finding out ;*

*Yea, marvellous things without number.*

*Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not :*

*He passeth on also, but I perceive him not.*

*Behold, he seizeth the prey, who can hinder him ?*

*Who will say unto him, What doest thou ?*

*Job IX. 5-12.*

JOB having once conceived the power of God becomes fascinated by the very tremendousness of it—the invincible might of his and man's adversary charms his eye and compels him to gaze and shudder, and run over it, feature after feature, unable to withdraw his look from it ; features all dark and terror-inspiring, as was natural from the attitude in which he conceived God to stand to him.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

Yes, says Job, God is mighty ; but He is far away, and invisible, mysterious, and inscrutable. The mightiest forms of nature are weak before Him ; and what am I ? Vain for me to plead or reason with such a Being.

G. G. BRADLEY.

The predominant quality in this idol of Job's imagination is not love but anger—capricious, inexorable anger, which long ago “ the helpers of Rahab ” (ver. 13) experienced to their cost.

T. K. CHEYNE.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### LIFE

*Now my days are swifter than  
a post :*

*They flee away, they see no  
good.*

*They are passed away as the  
swift ships :*

*As the eagle that swoopeth  
on the prey.*

*Job IX. 25-26.*

papyrus), and from the air (the eagle), to describe the rapidity with which his days of happiness have passed away. This passage was evidently in the mind of the author of the Book of Wisdom, who has added a fourth figure (the arrow), to describe the rapidity with which human happiness flees away (Wisdom v. 9-12).

BP. WORDSWORTH.

Perhaps the idea to be seized is not so much the swiftness of the passage, as their leaving no trace or track behind them. Some read " hostile " ships, which would make the sense, My days have gone off like the light vessels of the pirates, having stripped me of my property. The figure of the eagle confirms such a reading, preserving the idea of robbery, spoil, prompt attack, and sudden retreat.—A. CLARKE.

My skiff is as thin as a nutshell, nay, even more fragile. Let the leak but widen a little and all is over. The slightest breach is sufficient to endanger all this frail edifice, which calls itself my being and my life.

AMIEL.

Our last day stands, the rest run.—J. TRAPP.

All our life is but a moment of time.—PLUTARCH

### THE DAYSMAN

*He is not a man, as I am,  
that I should answer him,  
That we should come together  
in judgement.*

*There is no daysman betwixt  
us,*

*That might lay his hand  
upon us both.*

*Job IX. 32-33.*

WHAT he needs is an umpire, standing between him and God ; then he might plead his cause without fear of the result. Thus in the very depth of misery there comes, not indeed a hope, but an aspiration for a mediator.

F. C. COOK.

He, the Absolute Being, is accuser and judge in one person ; there is between them no arbitrator.—DELITZSCH.

Daysman, in our law, means an arbitrator, or umpire between party and party ; as it were, bestowing a day to decree, judge, or decide a matter. “ Day ” is used in law for the day of appearance in court for hearing a matter for trial.—MINSHIEU.

There was a double use of the daysman, and his laying his hand upon them. To keep the different parties asunder lest they should fall out and strike one another ; to keep them together that they might not depart from each other.—E. LEIGH.

It is singular how often Job gives utterance to wants and aspirations which under the Christian economy are supplied and gratified. Out of his religious entanglement he proclaimed the necessity of a mediator to humanise God two thousand years before He came.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

Christ came and fulfilled this prayer.—GREGORY.

Christ, by joining the human nature to the Divine in His own Person, has united God and Man in an indissoluble bond of peace.—THEODORET.

### MY SOUL IS WEARY

*My soul is weary of my life ;  
I will give free course to my  
complaint ;  
I will say unto God, Do not  
condemn me ;  
Shew me wherefore thou con-  
tendest with me.*

*Job X. 1-2.*

AS if it were expressed in plain words : Whereas Thou exerciseth judgment upon me by scourging me, show me that by these scourges Thou art making me secure against the Judgment.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

Being weary of his life, and having ease no other way, Job resolves to speak : he will not give vent to his soul by violent hands, but he will give vent to the bitterness of his soul by violent words. He will complain : he will not impeach God, but will suppose the blame to be in himself, and willingly bear it. He will speak, but it shall be the "bitterness of his soul" that he will express, not his settled judgment. The first word shall be a prayer, and, as I am willing to understand it, it is a good prayer, that he might be delivered from the sting of his afflictions : do not condemn me, do not separate me for ever from Thee. Though I lie under the cross, let me not lie under the curse : though I smart by the rod of a father, let me not be cut off by the sword of a judge. Thou dost correct me, I will bear that as well as I can, but oh, do not condemn me !—HENRY.

This is a model of prayer for all, combining the prayer of the publican, and a prayer for that light for which we long so earnestly in times of affliction and darkness.—S. LEATHES.

Whatever distemper be in our spirits, which we cannot get suppressed and calmed, it is better to go to God with it.—HUTCHESON.

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## THE FIRST DEBATE

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### ZOPHAR SPEAKS

*Then answered Zophar . . .*  
*Job XI. 1.* **I**N sour godliness he excelled  
all the rest. He is the most  
inveterate of Job's accusers.

This chapter and the twentieth comprehend all he said. He was too crooked to speak much in measured verse.—A. CLARKE.

Zophar signifieth a watcher ; he watched for Job's halting, and took him up before he was down. He is styled the Naamathite, which signifieth fair, but he dealeth not so fair with his friend as had been fit, for he giveth him no honour or respect at all. He treateth him with singular violence, or rather, virulence of speech, savouring more of passion than charity. After misinterpreting the words of the innocent Job, he lays to his charge, loquacity, lying, scoffing, self-conceit, and arrogance. For want of lesser arguments he falls foul upon him in this manner.—J. TRAPP.

Instead of joining with Job in his prayer for a little respite from his pain, with which Job had concluded his discourse, he calls him an idle talker, and accuses him of irreverence towards God. Concerning whose incomprehensible counsels, and irresistible power, he discourses with great sense, and gives Job exceeding good advice ; but still follows the opinion of the other two friends, that he would not have been so miserable if he had not been so wicked.—BP. PATRICK.

The new point in Zophar's discourse is the assertion that Job's punishment would prove to be even less than his crime were the truth made known.—F. C. COOK.

Zophar is a private dogmatist, and as such the hottest and most intolerant, having no argument but only his own "of course."—A. B. DAVIDSON.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### WHAT CANST THOU KNOW ?

*What canst thou do ? . . .*

*What canst thou know ?*

*Job XI. 8.*

**Z**OPHAR called Job back to beginnings, to realities, to limitations. This thing, he said, is higher than heaven ; what canst thou do ? It is deeper than hell ; what canst thou know ? We cannot know the Godhead, for it is higher than heaven and deeper than Hades ; it belongs to all the unmeasured space, all the infinite intellectual territory, which has not yet been crushed into maps. But though I cannot measure the sun, I can enjoy the sunlight. That is my province, then ; I cannot measure his diameter, but I can hail his summer and welcome his morning, and bathe my cold life in his warm radiance. That is what we can do, and that we are called upon to do. We cannot count the sands upon the seashore, but we can walk over the golden path, and let the blue waves break in white laughter on our feet as we traverse that highway of beauty and vision. We cannot put the Atlantic into a thimble, but we can traverse it, sail upon it, turn it into a highway, utilise it, and make it not the separator, but the uniter of the nations. So our not knowing and our not being able to do need not prevent our enjoyment and our service and our discipline. We are not called upon to give great intellectual answers to unfathomable questions, but we are called upon to do good according to our opportunities, and to redeem the time, and to wait patiently for the Lord, who will give us wider horizons and more enduring suns.—JOSEPH PARKER.

Thou couldst never find out divine things if the gods should please to hide their thoughts, not even if thou couldst search all things.—SOPHOCLES.

JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered and said,  
No doubt but ye are the people,  
And wisdom shall die with  
you.*

*Job XII. 1-2.*

THE whole argument of Job in these three chapters may be summed up in a few points. The correlation between goodness and prosperity assumed by his friends does not rest on facts ; whatever evils exist in the universe come from God's work ; all attempts to frame a theodicea for this life are false and sophisticated ; all that a good man can do is to retain trust in God though without hope of living to see the cause of right triumph ; the sense of inner weakness, past and present sinfulness, will find expression in prayer, but a consideration of the shortness of life, its wretchedness, its hopeless end, brings out an aspiration, developed by spiritual affliction into a hope of restoration to life, and of a last judgment, which must issue in the perfect establishment of the right.—F. C. COOK.

Job's answer reproves scornfully the wisdom of his friends, charging them with telling him only what he knows, and what even the brute creation could feel of the might and wisdom of God ; towards God he is still more urgent in pleading to know the reason of His doings, but there are gleams of trust amidst his despondency.—A. BARRY.

When we compare Job's frame of mind, and his religious and moral views of the world, in this discourse, with those expressed in his former speeches, we find a point of superiority and progress, in his relation to the Divine Creator, an inward sense of fellowship blossoming into what is at least a lively longing after eternal union with God.—O. ZÖCKLER.

### LET NATURE SPEAK

*But ask now the beasts, and  
they shall teach thee ;  
And the fowls of the air, and  
they shall tell thee :  
Or speak to the earth, and  
it shall teach thee ;  
And the fishes of the sea shall  
declare unto thee.  
Who knoweth not in all these,  
That the hand of the Lord  
hath wrought this ?  
In whose hand is the soul of  
every living thing,  
And the breath of all mankind.  
Job XII. 7-10.*

HE affirms that his friends may even learn wisdom from the lower animals of God's creation, who, though they do not possess knowledge, yet convey it to all who consider them.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

It is not unlikely that Job with such words was sending Zophar to school to learn his A, B, C again, and to learn it of the meanest creatures, thus twitting him with the fact that he need not travel so far as heaven or hell for instances of God's power and wisdom, since they may be contemplated in each creature. Without tool or toil He alone made all, and He alone manageth and ordereth all according to the good pleasure of His will. Neither needed He to subscribe His name to His work, for all that He hath made proclaim that He made them.—J. TRAPP.

They teach us obedience to the will of God, for all creatures obey the law of their creation ; they teach us also dependence upon God, for the eyes of all look up unto Him that they may receive good.—CARYL.

Thou needest not go further than the beasts and birds to know how well the wicked fare. The earth brings forth her fruit to them abundantly ; and the fishes of the sea deny them not their service. Who is so stupid as not to understand by all this, that God hath ordered it should be thus ?—BP. PATRICK.

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## THE FIRST DEBATE

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### LET CONSCIENCE SPEAK

*Though he slay me, yet will  
I wait for him.*

*Job XIII. 15.*

UNTIL I am slain I wait.  
LUTHER.

I await what He may do,  
even to smiting with death.

DELITZSCH.

Bold as these expressions are, they show the courage of a clean conscience.—WEMYSS.

I will still maintain mine innocence, though I were at the last gasp, and had no hope of life.—BP. PATRICK.

Job had nothing now to lose but life. Perhaps, thought he, the Lord will proceed so far against me, as to take away my life.—E. LEIGH.

Though He should multiply my miseries, and lay stroke after stroke upon me, till He had dashed the very breath out of my body, yet He shall not be so rid of me, for I will hang on still ; and if I must needs die, I will die at His feet, and in the midst of death expect a better life from Him.—J. TRAPP.

Interpreters are divided about the meaning of this passage, but the balance is in favour of our Version, first by the undoubted sense of the next verses, and by the constant use of “to wait for” in the sense of trustfulness. Job will wait upon God ; he is still sure that, before Him, right is right, and that he shall be justified as against the accusations of his friends. The words are rightly taken as the model of an undying and unconquerable trust.—A. BARRY.

The man who has acquired such faith as this is the true freeman of the universe, clad in stoutest coat of mail against disaster and sophistry—the man whom nothing can enslave, and whose guerdon is the serene happiness that can never be taken away.—JOHN FISKE.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### LET HOPE SPEAK

*If a man die, shall he live  
again ?*

*Job XIV. 14.*

JOB calls death a change,  
and by way of eminency,  
my change ; not an anni-  
hilation, but a mutation.

E. LEIGH.

Job must have had a deep experience of the inwardness of the relation between the creature and his Creator, if he was able to give such an expression to it as this dreamy hope of the future.—SCHLOTTMANN.

The author of our book confirms us in what one of the old writers says, that the hope of eternal life is a flower which grows on the brink of hell. In its blooming, however, it is not yet a hope, but a longing.

DELITZSCH.

This simple germ-hope of a resurrection acquires great significance as a step in the doctrinal and ethical course of thought in the book. If we still call it a hope we must in any case keep in view the wide interval which separates this forlorn flame of hope, flickering up for once only, and then immediately dying out, from that hope of a resurrection which is so confidently expressed in ch. xix. 25.—O. ZÖCKLER.

On the interpretation of the whole passage, vers. 13-15, depends to a great extent a right insight into the scope and object of the book. Job expresses a desire that the grave may not be his everlasting home ; and as he proceeds he finds a real ground for such a hope in God's love of the creation, His desire to the work of His own hands. This may be but a yearning, an inspiration, but it indicates the existence and strength of a feeling which, when developed, would issue in the belief of a future compensation.—F. C. COOK.

## THE SECOND DEBATE

### ELIPHAZ SPEAKS

*Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said,*

*Should a wise man make answer with vain knowledge . . . ?*

*Job XV. 1-2.*

**I**N this second encounter Eliphaz falls upon Job, not so much with stronger arguments as with harder words, reproaching him bitterly with more eloquence than wisdom.

In this reply we may see what an evil thing it is to be carried away with prejudice and pertinacy, which makes a man fall foul upon his friends. Here is enough said to have driven this sorrowful man into utter despair, had not God upheld his spirit.—J. TRAPP.

This speech exhibits a striking contrast to the formal politeness of Eliphaz's first address. At the outset he indulges in bitter sarcasm and reproaches, and pronounces a strong censure upon Job for maintaining opinions as to the indiscriminate distribution of happiness and suffering in the world, as tending to sap the foundations of religion. The purport of the whole address is to uphold the rectitude of the providential procedure of God at the expense of Job. Although Eliphaz erred in the inferences he drew from the statement, he was right in saying that all religion is summarily comprehended in reverence for God, and that spirit of dependence and of faith which leads to prayer.—R. JAMIESON.

The gloomy picture with which the discourse closes, although it fails as to its special occasion, contains much that is worth pondering. It is brilliantly distinguished by rare truth of nature and conformity to experience in its descriptions, whether it treats of the inward torment and distress of conscience of the wicked, or of the cheerless and desperate issue of his life.—O. ZÖCKLER.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### ART THOU THE FIRST MAN ?

*Art thou the first man that  
was born ?*

*Or wast thou brought forth  
before the hills ?*

*Hast thou heard the secret  
counsel of God ?*

*And dost thou restrain wisdom  
to thyself ?*

*Job XV. 7-8.*

THOU art but a man, why dost thou talk as if thou wert God, or at least were made before the world ?

BP. PATRICK.

Thou speakest of Providence as if thou wert older than the world, and hadst been present in council with the Deity at the creation.

MICHAELIS.

Here God is represented in Oriental language as seated in a divan, or council of state, and Eliphaz asks of Job whether *he* had been admitted to that council. Having obtained the secret of the council, art thou now keeping it wholly to thyself ?—as a prime minister might be supposed to keep the purposes resolved on in the divan.—BARNES.

Thou, who wouldest be wiser than all other men, dost thou stand perchance at the head of humanity, like the Logos, the first alike in age and in worth and nearness to God.—EWALD.

Art thou the Wisdom and Son of God, who was before Abraham, before Adam, before any creature whatever : who was in the beginning with God, and was God ?—J. GILL.

As if he had said in plainer words : Thou, who speakest of the Eternal One, consider that thou art a creature of time. Thou that arguest concerning this Wisdom, remember that thou knowest not His counsel.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

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## THE SECOND DEBATE

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### JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered and said,  
I have heard many such  
things :*

*Miserable comforters are ye  
all.*

*Job XVI. 1-2.*

THIS chapter begins Job's reply to Eliphaz, and it is but the second part of the same song of lamentation, with which he had before bemoaned himself, and to the same melancholy tune.—HENRY.

Although he had little or nothing to answer unto but what he had answered before, yet that he might not say nothing, he replied to Eliphaz's painted speech, and giveth him to know that wise men look for matter, and not for words only, from those that accost them.

J. TRAPP.

Job is now stimulated by the bitter answers of his friends to retort upon them with more passionate language ; and so the controversy rises higher and higher, without any hope of solution, till it is terminated by Elihu and by God.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

What else are we taught by the tutorage of Job, but that everyone should learn to look to it heedfully, that in the season of sorrow he never urge words of upbraiding. If there be some points which might be justly found fault with in time of distress, they ought to be put aside, lest the comforter by rebuking heighten the sorrow, which he had it in view to alleviate.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

Some comforters have but one song to sing, and they have no regard to whom they sing it.—CALVIN.

It is in the expression of his confidence, and of his inward yearning and waiting for the Divine testimony of his innocence, that the significance of this discourse culminates.—O. ZÖCKLER.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### MY WITNESS IS IN HEAVEN

*Even now, behold, my witness  
is in heaven,*

*And he that voucheth for me  
is on high.*

*My friends scorn me :*

*But mine eye poureth out  
tears unto God ;*

*That he would maintain the  
right of a man with God,*

*And of a son of man with his  
neighbour !*

*Job XVI. 19-21.*

THE designation which Job here applies to himself, "son of man," is remarkable ; he feels that he really represents the cause of suffering humanity. We know of whom in this he was a true type.

F. C. COOK.

Every man who in what he does aims at human praises seeks a witness on earth ; but he that is eager to please Almighty God by his deeds,

takes thought that he has a witness in heaven. It often happens that the very best things in us are found fault with by inconsiderate men, but he that has a witness in heaven has no need to fear men's reproofs. Also, in pleading to have his case heard before God, Job was perhaps hoping that the cause for which he had been smitten would be openly declared, as it would be if he were arraigned before an earthly tribunal.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

This is surely a wonderful declaration for a man in the position of Job. What can the believer, in the full light of the Gospel revelation, say more, with the knowledge of One in heaven ever making intercession for him ? And yet Job's faith had risen to such a height as this, and had grasped such a hope as this. In no other book of the Bible is there such a picture of faith clinging to the all-just God for justification as in the Book of Job.—S. LEATHES.

### GOD IS MY SURETY

*Give now a pledge, be surety  
for me with thyself ;  
Who is there that will strike  
hands with me ?*

*Job XVII. 3.*

IN an earlier speech Job had already expressed a longing for an arbiter between himself and God. That longing is now beginning to be gratified by the certainty that, though the God in the world may be against him, the God in heaven is on his side. All that he asks is a pledge from God, his Witness, to see his innocence recognised by God, his Persecutor.—CHEYNE.

To lay down a pledge was to put into court before a judge security to pay or perform whatever should be adjudged. "Striking hands" was the manner of being bound or becoming surety.—DIODATI.

A wonderful prophecy, springing forth from the inmost depths of human need and human craving, and like a spiritual arrow, feathered with the wings of the Holy Ghost, and put on the string of man's bow by the hand of God Himself. A wonderful prophecy, indeed, and literally fulfilled in Christ, who, being both God and Man, strikes hands with Man by actual contact as Man, and is his surety with God, and therefore called "surety" (Heb. vii. 22), as well as "mediator." Here is the triumph of Job's faith. It is like the faith of Abraham, when God commanded him to sacrifice Isaac. God had seemed to be Job's enemy : he had even spoken of God as such ; but to whom shall he turn ? Not to men : his friends mock him. To whom but to God ?—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Lord, Thou knowest how unjustly I am evil spoken of in many parts ; where I may not answer for myself, answer Thou for me.—WM. COWPER.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS

*Yet shall the righteous hold  
on his way,*

*And he that hath clean hands  
shall wax stronger and  
stronger.*

*Job XVII. 9.*

THE word "hold" here signifies, hold fast and cleave to, as well as hold on.

E. LEIGH.

He shall not leave the ways of piety, notwithstanding his crosses or your censures.

BP. WILSON.

Stumble he may for a time at his own calamity, but as he that stumbleth, and yet falleth not, gets ground, so fareth it with the righteous. He shall hold his way toughly, he shall stick to it, no going aside a nail's breadth. Not only shall he hold his own, but get more grace; not only persevere, but proceed and make progress.—J. TRAPP.

The righteous, instead of drawing back, or so much as starting back, because of Job's affliction, or standing still to deliberate whether he should proceed or not, shall with so much the more constancy and resolution hold on his way and press forward. Those who keep their eye upon heaven as their end will keep their feet in the paths of religion as their way, whatever difficulties and discouragements they meet with in it.

HENRY.

By "clean hands" purity and holiness are suggested. Porphyry observes, that in the Leontian mysteries the initiated had their hands washed with honey, instead of water, to intimate that they were to keep their hands pure from all wickedness and mischief; honey being of a cleansing nature, and preserving other things from corruption.—BURDER.

### BILDAD SPEAKS

*Then answered Bildad . . .*

*Thou that tearest thyself in  
thine anger,*

*Shall the earth be forsaken  
for thee ?*

*Or shall the rock be removed  
out of its place ?*

*Yea, the light of the wicked  
shall be put out . . .*

*Job XVIII. 1, 4-5*

**I**N his speech Bildad asserts that Job had broken out into pride, but in his speaking he gives a token with what pride he was himself swollen, who supposed that Job had spoken things that he did not understand. Bildad swells against the strokes of Job not knowing that the complexion of the present life does not in the

least degree prove the worth of men's conduct. For very often good things befall the bad, and bad ones befall the good.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

A fine and most effective stroke of sarcasm. On the one side, the impotent storming of Job's wrath ; on the other, the calm, unalterable movement of Divine law. How foolish the former when confronting the latter ! By what right could *he* expect the Divine order to be overthrown for *his* sake ? For *thee* is everything to be plunged into chaos ?—L. J. EVANS.

The course of justice, says Bildad, is as firmly settled as the course of nature.—J. TRAPP.

Canst thou move God from His constant justice, which is as firm as a rock.—DIODATI.

The description he gives of the fate of the wicked is terribly brilliant, solemn and pathetic, as becomes the stern preacher of repentance with haughty mien and pharisaic self-confidence ; it is none the less beautiful, and considered in itself also true—a masterpiece of the poet's skill in poetic idealising, and in presenting the truth in dramatic form.—DELITZSCH.

### JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered and said,  
How long will ye vex my soul,  
And break me in pieces with  
words ? . . .*

*Have pity upon me, have  
pity upon me, O ye my  
friends ;*

*For the hand of God hath  
touched me.*

*Job XIX. 1-2, 21.*

THIS speech of Job is the turning point in his pleadings for himself before man and God, and forms the climax of previous expressions of hope.—A. BARRY.

His words strongly indicate the depth of his distress, and that his spirit was worn down with the length and severity of his suffering.—A. CLARKE.

Job declares, in the strongest possible language, his conviction that the calamities, which he enumerates with greater force and fullness than in any preceding discourse, are not reconcilable with any known principle of the Divine government : they come from God, and cannot be justified by such reasonings as those which he has repeatedly refuted : they ought to excite pity ; man ought to sympathise with his fellow when smitten by God. This course of thought issues in a complete triumph of the inner principle. He calls attention to the words which he is about to speak, as the only ones which deserve a perpetual record, which sum up the whole of his convictions, and will endure for ever.

F. C. COOK.

Some there are who can despise death if it threaten them, but they cannot bear to be belied, reproached, and slandered.—ERASMUS.

The mind of godly men has this characteristic peculiar to itself, that when it suffers unjust treatment it is not so much moved to wrath as to prayer.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

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## THE SECOND DEBATE

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### RECORD THESE WORDS

*Oh that my words were now  
written !*

*Oh that they were inscribed in  
a book !*

*That with an iron pen and  
lead*

*They were graven in the rock  
for ever !*

*Job XIX. 23-24.*

JOB appeared to be at the point of death ; but his faith did not fail ; nay, it became brighter and brighter. It seemed that he must die ; but there was one thing that he would not allow to die with him, and he delivers it here as his last will and testament.

This last will and testament is a creed and a prophecy. It has a pathological prologue prefixed to it, and an epilogue no less pathological subjoined to it : “ Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends ; for the hand of God hath touched me.” And, since the thoughts he is about to utter had been comforting to himself, he desires that they may be no less consolatory to others after his death.

He desires that his words may be “ written,” in order that they may not be forgotten ; he desires also that they may be registered in a book ; that they may be enrolled upon record, as a public instrument ; and then he utters a third wish. Since ink and parchment will decay, and since he desires that his words may last for ever, he prays that they may be “ engraven,” engraven “ on stone, with a pen of iron.” And since letters graven on stone with a pen of iron may be choked up with dust, or worn out with age, or be corroded and defaced, he desires that the characters graven “ on the rock ” with an iron pen, may be filled up “ with lead ” poured into them. The words are to be his epitaph.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### MY REDEEMER LIVETH

*But I know that my redeemer  
liveth,*

*And that he shall stand up at  
the last upon the earth :*

*And after my skin hath been  
thus destroyed,*

*Yet from my flesh shall I see  
God :*

*Whom I shall see for myself,  
And mine eyes shall behold,  
and not another.*

*Job XIX. 25-27.*

THE main point of Job's assurance is, that God will appear to vindicate him, and that he himself shall see Him in peace and reconciliation. This is the point that absorbs his attention, and probably so absorbed his imagination that the surroundings of the event were hardly thought of. These surroundings hardly form a positive part of his assurance at all.

We must lay no stress on them as parts of his conception or vision. We should be wrong to state that Job contemplates a purely spiritual vision of God. And we should be wrong to say that he contemplates being invested with a new body when he sees God. He was a living man when he projected before his own mind this glorious vision ; and probably he fancies himself to see it, when it is realised, as a living man. He sees the coming appearance of God, and he sees himself present with it, and he fancies himself a living man. But Job does not anticipate this appearance of God on his behalf in this life—that is, prior to his death through his disease. Restitution in this life is an illusion, a false issue, which the friends hold up before him. But he knows better. The certainty which he expresses is a certainty which concerns him after death—without his flesh he shall see God. *He* shall see Him ; and *his* eyes, not another's, behold Him. Other eyes may see Him too—but *his* shall. Job's sorrow was that

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## THE SECOND DEBATE

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God was unseen, that He had eluded his search, but this hiding of Himself shall not always continue.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

Job had already recognised God as his *judge*, his *umpire*, his *advocate*, his *witness*, and *surety*, and in some cases by formal confession of the fact, in others by earnest longing after and aspirations for someone to act in that capacity. Here, then, he goes a step further in expression, if not by implication, and declares his knowledge that he has a *Goel* or Redeemer. This *goel* was the name given to the next of kin whose duty it was to redeem, ransom, or avenge one who had fallen into debt or bondage, or had been slain in a family feud. The various and conditional functions, then, of this *Goel*, Job is assured, God will take upon Himself for him ; He will avenge his quarrel, He will be surety for him. He will vindicate him before men and before God Himself ; He will do for him what none of his professed friends would undertake to do. And as to this matter, he has not the slightest doubt ; he states most emphatically that he himself *knows* that this *Goel* liveth.—S. LEATHES.

I profess my decided opinion, that if these expressions are not an empty and unmeaning pomp of words, they clearly mark the glorious day of the resurrection. Turn whithersoever we may, it is impossible, by fair criticism, to escape the conclusion that the Redeemer, the Living One, the last standing over the dust, refers to the public vindication of Job's innocence ; who, though expecting to go down into the dust of death under the reproach of being a guilty person, yet, supported by an upright conscience, declares that a crown of righteousness is laid up for him, which he is fully assured, and desires his assurance to be known to pos-

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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terity, will be publicly conferred upon him, by the righteous Judge of the world, and Redeemer of mankind. This is the point to which the sublime and striking introduction tends, whether (according to my opinion) the image be that of a sepulchral stone, or refer to any other kind of durable monument. With this view, it cannot be well denied that, under the appellation of Redeemer, and even Living Redeemer, the Messiah is to be understood.—SCHULTENS.

No doubtful meaning of any words can efface from this passage the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh. Job looked forward to a manifestation of his Redeemer at the end ; he knew that he himself for himself should gaze upon his God, that after the destruction of his body he should with the eyes of his flesh behold him.—PUSEY.

Here, however, is another view : To refer the passage to the general resurrection would be to contradict the general scope and tenor of the poem, since not the slightest trace of such doctrine appears elsewhere in it. The sentiment of the patriarch is simply this—that he felt a full assurance that at some future period God would interpose for him, vindicate his innocence, and punish his calumniators. And this his expectation was completely verified ; for at the close of the time appointed for the trial of Job, the Almighty appears in solemn majesty, humbles the whole party in the dust by a series of questions fitted to demonstrate human weakness, orders sacrifice to be offered for Job's friends before they could be accepted, restores Job himself to more than his former prosperity, and crowns his latter end with honour and comfort. Is not this, then, the result which Job had in view, when he uttered these memorable words ?—WEMYSS.

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## THE SECOND DEBATE

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It is but justice to Wemyss to observe, that he apologises for adopting this side of the question, and pleads that he does not deny the truth *in* the translation, but the truth *of* it.—COBBIN.

But Job says, Thou wilt raise my flesh, which has suffered all these things.—CLEMENT OF ROME.

Job undoubtedly prophesied of the Resurrection : In my flesh shall I see God ; that is, I shall be in the flesh, when I shall see God.—AUGUSTINE.

“ I myself shall see Him, and *not another*,” that is, Job declares that he will preserve his own *personal identity* both in body and soul.—THOMAS AQUINAS.

The doctrine of the Resurrection was, in Job’s mind, like fire latent in flint, and it was struck out into a flame by the steel-like allision of pain, and of the hard words of his friends.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

I am persuaded, continues Job with holy confidence, and a consciousness of his own innocence, afflicted as I now am, reduced to a skeleton, and in the full prospect of dissolution, that the Almighty will not for ever forsake me ; that this dying frame shall hereafter be rebuilt ; by the mighty Builder, my great restorer or redeemer.—M. GOOD.

This is the turning-point in Job’s experience. He is never afterwards exactly the man he was before. He never again uses such language as came from him in ch. iii. and xvi. The dark hour is over ; the anger, the impatience, the bitterness, seem gone. He still wonders at the unexplained mystery of God’s providence towards the righteous, and the still more inexplicable enigma of His dealings with evil-doers, but there abides with him the power of a glorious hope, bringing forth penitence instead of despair.

T. LEWIS.

### ZOPHAR SPEAKS

*Then answered Zophar . . .  
Knowest thou not this of old  
time,  
Since man was placed upon  
earth,  
That the triumphing of the  
wicked is short,  
And the joy of the godless but  
for a moment ?*

*Job XX. 1, 4-5.*

**T**HIS is the friend's reply to Job's appeal to his Redeemer : " I know that my Redeemer liveth."

BP. WORDSWORTH.

Or, a reply to Job's complaint in the twelfth chapter that the wicked live usually in the greatest peace and prosperity. But henceforth Zophar will say no more ; either he

had said what he could, or was satisfied with Job's reply in the next chapter, or because he thought to say more was to speak in vain, which no wise man could do.

J. TRAPP.

The abrupt beginning of this speech of Zophar shows that he was in a passion, which though he pretends to bridle it, would not let him consider calmly the protestation Job had made of his innocence. He repeats the old commonplace view of the certain downfall of the wicked, which he illustrates, after an excellent fashion, with great variety of figures and remarks upon histories as old as the world. All the flaw in his discourse is this, which was common to him with the rest, that he imagined God never varied from this method, and therefore Job without doubt was a very wicked man, though it did not appear that he was so in any other way than in his misfortune.—BP. PATRICK.

Zophar seeks to stifle the new trust which Job conceives towards God, and to extinguish the faith which bursts upward from beneath the ashes of the conflict.—DELITZSCH.

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## THE SECOND DEBATE

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### JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered and said . . .*

*How then comfort ye me in vain,*

*Seeing in your answers there remaineth only falsehood?*

*Job XXI. 1, 34.*

TO bring the dispute to a speedier issue, Job, after a short preface, reproving their incivility, comes close to the business, and doth not content himself merely with denying what they had said, but shows them where the

fallacy in their discourse lay ; namely, in concluding a universal law from some particulars. He maintains from history and observation as good as they could produce, that though God do make some wicked men examples of His wrath, as they had said, yet He lets others, even of the vilest sort, live prosperously and die peaceably, and have stately monuments built to perpetuate their memory. In brief, he shows there is great variety in God's proceedings about the punishment of the wicked.—BP. PATRICK.

Job does not deny that the wicked are sometimes punished on earth ; but he asserts that this is not the law of God's moral government, and thence he concludes that it is impossible to determine from a man's circumstances on earth what his moral character is.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Your boasted consolations are contradicted by facts.

A. R. FAUSSET.

There could be no end of enumerating examples of good men made miserable and wicked men prosperous. Why did Marius live to an old age, and die so happily at his own house, in his seventh consulship ? Why was that inhuman wretch Cinna permitted to enjoy so long a reign ? Dionysius, to his impiety

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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towards the gods, added injustice to man. Yet neither did Olympic Jove strike him with his thunder, nor did Æsculapius cause him to die by tedious disease and a lingering death. He died in his bed, had funeral honours paid to him, and left his power, which he had wickedly obtained, a just and lawful inheritance to his son.—CICERO.

How varied are the fates of men ; some fare sumptuously every day, while heavy misfortunes fall upon others, who worship the gods piously and ever lead an upright life.—EURIPIDES.

Many men who are wicked, are rich, having heaped up riches unjustly, while many, who are good, suffer hunger and live with poverty.—ARISTOPHANES.

The good fortune of evil and unjust men, both in private and public life, who although not truly happy, yet are deemed to be very much so in common opinion, and are improperly hymned by the muses, lead you, not very sensibly, to impiety. Or, perhaps, on seeing that impious old men, after arriving at their end, have left behind them grandchildren in the greatest honours, you are disturbed for the present, in all these matters : you conceived that you beheld in their doings, as in a mirror, the disregard of all things on the part of the gods, not knowing in what way they pay up the full amount of their contributions to everyone.—PLATO.

When we behold a man faithful and just,  
Humbly devout, true to his word and trust,  
Dejected and oppressed ;—whilst the profane,  
And wicked, and unjust in glory reign ;  
Proudly triumphant, flush'd with power and gain ;  
What inference can human reason draw,  
How can we guess the secrets of thy law ?

THEOGNIS.

## THE THIRD DEBATE

### ELIPHAZ SPEAKS

*Then answered Eliphaz . . .*

*Can a man be profitable unto  
God ?*

*Surely he that is wise is  
profitable unto himself.*

*Job XXII. 1-2.*

**J**OB having intimated, ch. xxi. 4, that his complaint was not to man but to God, Eliphaz asks him, whether God hath any interest in refusing to bring him to that trial which he is so ready to

call for. If, Eliphaz adds, God declines Job's challenge, it can be for no other reason, but that He is already fully aware of Job's misconduct, and needs not to investigate the matter.—CARYL.

Thou seemest to think that God is thy debtor, on the ground of thy righteousness. But suppose that thou art righteous, wouldest thou thus be conferring a favour on God ? No : by righteousness "a wise man is profitable to himself" ; and if thou wert righteous, thou wouldest be reaping benefits from thy righteousness. But I affirm that thou art not righteous, and that thou art injuring thyself by unrighteousness.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

Eliphaz argues that since man's goodness does not add to, or man's badness take from, the happiness of God, the cause of the goods and ills sent must lie in the men themselves.—A. R. FAUSSET.

Methinks I can almost forgive Eliphaz his hard censures of Job, which we had in the beginning of the chapter, though they were very unjust and unkind, for the good counsel and encouragement which he gives him in the verses with which he closeth his discourse, than which nothing could be better said, or more to the purpose. Though he thought Job a bad man, yet he saw reason to have hopes concerning him.—HENRY.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered and said  
... Oh that I knew where  
I might find him.*

*Job XXIII. 1, 3.*

**W**HAT he sighed for we possess—boldness of access to the throne of God.

A. R. FAUSSET.

In this chapter appears the struggle between fear and faith.—HENRY.

Job in his reply offers the sublimest of spectacles; not that of a good man struggling with adversity, but that of one who, though prostrated by it, and relinquishing all struggles as utterly useless, still cleaves to goodness and to God.—F. C. COOK.

Job turns wholly to God, longing to find Him that he might plead with Him, but he sinks down despondently before the inscrutable mystery of His ways, and dwells upon similar facts which he has observed in human life of the incomprehensibleness of God's dealings with men.—A. BARRY.

O that He would appear to me in vision, or spiritually show Himself present by His power in my heart.

DIODATI.

The Psalmist would have said, "find my God." The absence of such personal expressions in Job's speeches is a peculiar feature of the book. There is something significant in his apparent avoidance of the Divine Name. Here there is deep pathos in it: "O that I might find Him!"—Him, my estranged God, whom my soul seeketh, but whom I hardly dare to name.—T. LEWIS.

It is the infinite for which we hunger, and we ride gladly upon every little wave that promises to bear us towards it.—HAVELOCK ELLIS.

How has He set me here, a tiny moving atom, yet

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## THE THIRD DEBATE

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more sure of my own minute identity than I am of all the vast panorama of things which lies outside of me? Has He indeed a tender and a patient thought of me, the frail creature whom He has moulded and made? I do not doubt it; I look up among the star-sown spaces, and the old aspiration rises in my heart, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even into His presence!" How would I go, like a tired and sorrowful child to his father's knee, to be comforted and encouraged, in perfect trust and love, to be raised in His arms, to be held to His heart! He would but look in my face, and I should understand without a question, without a word!—A. C. BENSON.

I was again seeking for a God. I remembered that I had lived only when I believed in a God. As it was before, so was it now; I had but to know God, in order to live; I had but to forget Him, to cease believing in Him, and I died. What was the meaning of this despair and renewal? I do not live when I lose faith in the existence of a God; long ago I should have killed myself, had I not had a dim hope of finding Him. I only live in reality when I feel and seek Him. "What more then do I seek?" a voice seemed to cry within me. "This is He, He without whom there is no life. To know God and to live are one. God is life. Live to seek God and life will not be without Him." Whereupon, stronger than ever life rose up in me, and the light that shone then has never left me.—TOLSTOY.

Consider what St. Augustine says, that he sought God in many places, and came at last to find Him in himself. Do you think it is of little importance for a distracted soul to understand this truth?

ST. TERESA.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### HIS QUEST FOR GOD

*Behold, I go forward, but he  
is not there ;*

*And backward, but I cannot  
perceive him :*

*On the left hand, when he  
doth work, but I cannot be-  
hold him :*

*He hideth himself on the right  
hand, that I cannot see him.*

*Job XXIII. 8-9.*

THE Hebrew geographers faced the East ; so “ be-fore ” means east ; “ behind ” means west ; the “ left hand,” the north ; the “ right hand,” the south. God’s glorious works are especially seen in the northern region of the sky by one in the northern hemisphere. The south is the unexplored country.

A. R. FAUSSET.

Job no doubt believed that God was everywhere present, but he could not fix his thoughts, nor form any clear judgment in his own mind. He was so harried and discomforted with his troubles that he was like a man in a fright or at his wits’ end, that runs this way and that but gets nowhere. By reason of the disorder and tumult of his spirit he could not fasten upon that which he knew to be in God. He turned to every side of his trouble, but could not perceive what God could be working at in afflicting him. He was lost in the labyrinth of the Divine counsels.—HENRY.

Job questioneth not God’s omnipresence, but complaineth that he himself was benighted.—J. TRAPP.

It should be observed that Job’s conviction of God’s absolute Presence comes out most strongly when he feels that he cannot discern Him.—F. C. COOK.

Or is it that God conceals Himself from Job, lest he should be compelled to acknowledge the right of the sufferer, and to withdraw his chastising hand from him ?—DELITZSCH.

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## THE THIRD DEBATE

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Why did the Spirit of the Lord inspire Job to make that impressive allusion ? “ On the left hand, where He doth work ” (A.V.). Surely it was to tell us, to our great and endless comfort, that there is a gospel of the left hand. It is easy to find a gospel of the right hand. But much of life is spent on the left hand, and a gospel of the left hand is precious as rubies. “ The left hand ” has always and everywhere typified what is undesired. In temporal matters we often discover the operation of our loving God where all is adverse. Sinister experiences prove to be Divine experiences. When we are where we deprecate being, we behold the handiwork of God. When health fails, when business deteriorates, when friends cast us asunder, when sorrow darkens our home, when causes languish which we dearly love—on the left hand God doth work. “ The left hand ” is the popular parable of the awkward. It is a dictionary’s definition of the word “ awkward ” that it is “ not dexterous.” A child knows that dexterity is right-handedness. So the right hand speaks of what is graceful, facile, and the left hand of that which is awkward. Many of us are, perhaps, at this moment, most awkwardly situated. Our location is “ on the left hand.” But God is located there too ! It is “ where He doth work.” The left hand is the abiding symbol of the inauspicious. Who goes to the left hand if he can help it ? But on the left hand “ *He* doth work.” From the beginning believers in “ luck ” have deplored and denounced the left hand. The left hand is, and always has been, the sign of the unsuccessful. Instinctively we feel we need a God who will work in the latitudes of the unsuccessful. And such a God is the God of the Bible.

DINSDALE T. YOUNG.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### AS GOLD REFINED

*But he knoweth the way that  
I take ;*

*When he hath tried me, I  
shall come forth as gold.*

*Job XXIII. 10.*

IT is a great comfort to those who mean honestly, to know that God understands their meaning. That their trial will have an end, and they shall come forth as gold, pure in itself and precious to the refiner ; they shall come forth as gold, approved and improved ; found to be good and made to be better.—HENRY.

He cannot be deceived nor blinded, either by the artifices of accusers or advocates, or by my misapprehensions, but He exactly knows the way that is with me, i.e. the disposition of my heart and the whole course of my life.—POOLE.

The way that is most familiar to me, and yet better known to Him than it is to me. The thought of being known to God, though he cannot see Him, immediately revives his sinking spirit.—T. LEWIS.

It was not of pride that this holy man likened himself in tribulation to gold, in that he, who was pronounced righteous before the stroke, was permitted to be tried that bad qualities might be cleared off, but the excellencies might be heightened. Less then than he was did he think himself to be, in that being delivered over to tribulation, he believed he was being purified.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

The word “ tried ” has the force of trial by fire, and that story is well known of him who, inquiring of the refiner of silver how he knew when the dross was sufficiently separated, received for answer, “ When I can see my own image perfectly reflected in it.”

THOMAS AQUINAS.

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## THE THIRD DEBATE

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### BILDAD SPEAKS

*Then answered Bildad . . .*

*How then can man be just  
with God ?*

*Job XXV. 1, 4.*

THE tone of Bildad's speech, though feeble, and without an attempt to grapple with the real difficulties of the question, is pleasing in tone,

free from Zophar's violence, and from the worldliness of Eliphaz.—F. C. COOK.

Bildad has little to say, and that little is little to the point. Thus endeth Bildad the Shuhite, who endeavoured to speak on a subject which he did not understand ; and, having got on bad ground, was soon confounded in his own mind, spoke incoherently, argued inconclusively, and came abruptly and suddenly to an end.—A. CLARKE.

The meaning of Bildad's speech is that not only God's Majesty, but man's own natural corruption also should keep him from contending with God.—DIODATI.

Bildad drops the main question of the prosperity of wicked men, as being unable to answer the proofs which Job had brought forward, but because he thought Job had made too bold with the Divine Majesty in his appeals to the Divine tribunal, he, in a few words, shows the infinite distance there is between God and man.—HENRY.

Bildad merely falls back upon the position twice assumed by Eliphaz, and twice allowed also by Job—the impossibility of man being just with God—and therefore implies the impiety of Job in maintaining his righteousness before God. God, he says, is almighty, infinite, and absolute. How can any man contend with Him, or claim to be pure in His sight ?

S. LEATHES.

### JOB'S REPLY

*Then Job answered and said,  
How hast thou helped him  
that is without power !  
How hast thou saved the arm  
that hath no strength !  
How hast thou counselled him  
that hath no wisdom,  
And plentifully declared  
sound knowledge !*

*Job XXVI. 1-3.*

**J**OB outdoes Bildad in magnifying God.—HENRY.

With this chapter begins the magnificent series of discourses in which Job reviews and sums up the whole controversy.—F. C. COOK.

It is worth noting that as Bildad's illustrations of his theme are drawn from the heavenly hosts and luminaries,

Job, in his reply, dwells principally, though not exclusively, on God's greatness as manifested in the heavens above.—L. J. EVANS.

Job derides Bildad's grave affectation of wisdom, and tells him, that though he talked as if he thought himself fit to be a coadjutor of God Almighty, his discourse was mean and flat in comparison with what he was able to speak himself concerning the omnipotent wisdom of God, which he sets forth in a far more lively manner.—BP. PATRICK.

Some have thought that in the following chapters of Job's discourse there is some corruption or dislocation of the text. Certainly, as it stands, while the sense of each portion is plain, and the two poetical passages—ch. xxvi. 5-14, and ch. xxviii—are among the grandest in the book, the connection of the whole presents such difficulty as is found in no other part of it.

A. BARRY.

This is an outburst of the most cutting sarcasm, the plain import of which is, that Bildad had adduced no new argument.—R. JAMIESON.

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## THE THIRD DEBATE

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### THE WHISPER OF HIS GLORY

*Lo, these are but the out-  
skirts of his ways :*

*And how small a whisper do  
we hear of him !*

*But the thunder of his power  
who can understand ?*

*Job XXVI. 14.*

WE feel, as it were, a zephyr of God's Presence walking in the garden of this world in the cool of the day.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

Some render the text :  
These are the edges or borders  
of His ways ; as if Job had

said : I have shown you only the borders ; I have not led you into the heart of the country, or into the midst of the works and ways of God, much less to the furthest extremity or outside of them. I have, indeed, spoken of very great and wonderful things, yet all that I have said is but little to what might be said, or, at least, to what really is. Others read it, " a whisper," which is but a little portion of a voice. How little a whisper has been heard of Him ! The works of God are, as it were, a whisper concerning Him ; all that we say, or can say, makes but a kind of silent report of God, in comparison to what He is, or to what might be said of Him.—CARYL.

As when one heareth the latter end only of a sentence, that which the echo resoundeth and no more.

J. TRAPP.

We can only hear the faintest whisper of His glory, and cannot understand or endure the full-toned thunder of His majesty. Job shows himself even more conscious than his friends of the grandeur and holiness of God ; but that has in no way rendered his position as a sufferer more intelligible. He cannot understand and they cannot explain ; but while he rejects their explanations, he rests secure in his own faith.—S. LEATHES.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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We speak of God, not so much as we should, but as much as we can.—AMBROSE.

The reference is to the works of nature, or rather to those of the greatest beauty and magnitude, such as are represented in the preceding verses of this chapter. These phenomena, splendid as they are, are but “the ends of His ways”—the lower ends. The great power stands at the back of them or above them. It calls to mind the impressive formula of the Arabian schoolmen, who call our present knowledge, or the knowledge of the senses, “the ends or off-cuttings of things.” They compare it to the threads which stick out from the lower or wrong side of the tapestry which the great Artificer is weaving above. Even the brilliant heavens present to us the lower side, the wrong side of the carpet, as it were, in which the figures (the ideas) are dim and confused. How glorious then must they stand out above, or to the mind that sees them from the higher plane!—T. LEWIS.

If God were to reveal himself in His full majesty, without accommodating Himself to the meanness of human nature, it would likelier be an astonishing thunder-like sound, than a sweet speech.—DIODATI.

Even the saints know but very little concerning God in this life; and yet even that little is not known without danger, since it is an occasion of pride.—QUESNEL.

Only the genuine man of science can truly know how utterly beyond, not only human knowledge, but human conception, is the Universal Power of which Nature, and Life, and Thought are manifestations.

HERBERT SPENCER.

Say what we can about God, say our best, we have yet to add instantly: “Lo, these are fringes of His ways.”—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

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## THE THIRD DEBATE

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### THE INWARD WITNESS

*My righteousness I hold fast,  
and will not let it go ;*

*My heart shall not reproach  
me so long as I live.*

*Job XXVII. 6.*

SO long as the bird in my  
bosom continueth singing.

J. TRAPP.

Job would not remove, he  
would not part with the con-  
science, and comfort, and

credit of his integrity ; he was resolved to defend it to the last : God knows, and my own heart knows, that I always meant well, and did not allow myself in the omission of any known duty, or the commission of any known sin. This is my rejoicing, and no man shall rob me of it ; I will never lie against my right. I will not give my heart leave to reproach me. But it is a good thing when a man has sinned to have a heart that will smite him.—HENRY.

I will resolutely maintain my righteousness, and not be persuaded by any reasons to desert its defence ; my conscience doth not accuse me hitherto, and it shall not upbraid me hereafter for betraying mine innocence.—BP. PATRICK.

The great thing in the world is not so much to seek happiness as to earn peace and self-respect.—HUXLEY.

Strive daily to become more what your Maker meant and means you to be, and daily gives you also the power to be—and you will cling more and more to the nobleness and virtue that is in you, saying, “ My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go.”

RUSKIN.

A good conscience is an inexhaustible fund of consolation and hope.—QUESNEL.

Labour to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called Conscience.—WASHINGTON.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### THE WONDERS OF THE EARTH

*Surely there is a mine for  
silver,  
And a place for gold which  
they refine.*

*Job XXVIII. 1.*

**Y**OU would have me give a reason, perhaps, why God punishes some wicked men, and others not at all ; but the wit and industry of mankind, which have discovered mines of silver and gold, must not think to find out this secret, which God hath reserved to Himself. Such an interpretation shows the link of connection between this chapter and the foregoing.—BP. PATRICK.

Silver and other precious metals come out of the earth, but wisdom, whose value exceeds all these earthly possessions, and to the consideration of which these opening verses prepare the way, is to be found nowhere within the province of the creature ; God alone possesses it and from God alone it comes ; and so far as man can and is to attain to it, it consists in the fear of the Lord, and the forsaking of evil.—DELITZSCH.

Here Job shows, what a great way the wit of man may go in diving into the depths of nature, and seizing the riches of it, what a great deal of knowledge and a great deal of wealth men may by their ingenious and industrious searches make themselves masters of. But doth it therefore follow that men may by their wit comprehend the reasons why some wicked people prosper, and others are punished, why some good people prosper, and others are afflicted ? No, by no means : the caverns of the earth may be discovered, but not the counsels of heaven. Men can easier break through the difficulties they meet with in getting worldly wealth, than through those they meet with in getting heavenly wisdom.—HENRY.

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## THE THIRD DEBATE

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### HEAVENLY WISDOM

*But where shall wisdom be found?*

*And where is the place of understanding?*

*Job XXVIII. 12.*

**W**ISDOM is here the end or meaning of life, in relation to self, to man, and to God; while "understanding" is the lower power of discerning or distinguishing between

true and false, good and evil.—A. BARRY.

Our word "understanding" is hardly the right word here. It is too vague and taken in too many different senses. The true sense of "understanding" here, must correspond to that of "wisdom." Whatever "wisdom" may be, as absolute truth, "understanding" is the power of discerning it, the higher vision of the higher truth. It is something which man has not in this life, as is most clearly expressed in the next verse. It is, however, an intelligence, clear, unmistakable, not admitting the least doubt. In the 21st verse it is said that it is "hid from the eyes of all living." In the other world, or in Death and Abaddon, as distinguished from the land of the living, there first begins to be heard a rumour, or whisper of it. Whatever may be that state of being, it is then that the great secret of God, the great end for which He made the world and man, begins to disclose itself. Something is learned about it after death, which no amount of natural knowledge or human science can give us here; whether it be the science of Bildad, or of Ptolemy, or of Laplace, or of a thousand years hence. Such merely natural knowledge never has, it never will, shed one single ray of light on the great question of questions. The utmost knowledge of the physical world can only give us the *how*; and even there, in its own natural

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department, the darkness and the mystery grow faster than any light it sheds. Nature presents more unsolved and unsolvable problems now than in the days of Pythagoras. Its study can never give us the *why*, the *reason* of nature itself. We may discover by the study of nature its adaptations, and designs without end, but never the design of those designs. It can never take us out of itself to the wisdom above, or to the world beyond, or to that remoter end to which the physical is only a means, and without which, or in the ignoring of which, it has neither a rational nor a moral value. Nature is but subordinate to a higher supernatural world.

The deep saith, It is not in me :  
And the sea saith, It is not with me.

The deep and the sea represent the physical world. They are put for its more unexplored recesses. There could not be a more express way of saying : this great wisdom of God is not revealed in the physical world. The broad face of nature, its immensity, even its unsearchableness, proclaim His glory, His greatness, the existence of something far above man and all conceivable being, but it reveals not the great secret of moral destinies. It is a mystery, but the humblest Christian, the most ignorant man, who has in his soul a true reverence for God, and a true hatred of sin, is nearer to this great secret of the Universe, even in the present life, than the proudest philosopher or the proudest man of science, who neither knows nor prizes such a state of soul.—T. LEWIS.

Wisdom is here the ideal according to which God created the world. When God thus gave outward form to Wisdom in creating the world, He also gave man the law by obeying which man corresponds to

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## THE THIRD DEBATE

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what he was meant to be in the archetypal world—and participates, after his measure, in wisdom. A comprehensive intellectual apprehension of the real nature of things is beyond man's mental grasp. He cannot without a revelation really contemplate things as they are—as they are seen by God ; but he can correspond to the realities as God sees them by obedience to elementary moral truth—by fear of the perfect moral Being—by practical renunciation of evil. Dogmatic wisdom has its root and beginning in the culture of those moral and spiritual sensibilities which Scripture calls the “fear of the Lord.”—H. P. LIDDON.

Wisdom is either natural or spiritual (1 Cor. ii.), earthly or heavenly (Jas. iii.). The wisdom here inquired after is supernal and supernatural ; such as can neither be found upon the earth, nor digged out of it ; such as cannot be fathomed or found out by human abilities or by natural reason. “But God revealeth it unto us by His Spirit ; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” The only wise God, who alone knows the price of wisdom, knows her retreat. For wisdom is in God, yea, God is wisdom itself. For the wisdom of God is nothing else but the most wise God ; since whatsoever is in God is God. And Job knew that there was no place out of God where His wisdom might be sought, and no way to it outside of himself.—J. TRAPP.

Wisdom is but a title—one of a crowd of noble titles—of true religion.—D. T. YOUNG.

To desire to judge of the mysteries, truths, and things of God, by the spirit of the world, is a kind of presumption all too common. A spirit who is God is necessary in order to fathom the designs of God.

QUESNEL.

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### WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING

*Behold, the fear of the Lord,  
that is wisdom ;  
And to depart from evil is  
understanding.*

*Job XXVIII. 28.*

**M**Y wisdom, saith God, is that whereby all things are governed ; *thy* wisdom is in feeling that My wisdom is right ; though thou dost not understand the principle which regulates it, and in shunning evil.—A. R. FAUSSET.

Sift thoroughly the secrets of thine own heart. If thou findest out that thou dost fear God, surely it is plain that of this wisdom thou art full. If thou art not able to learn what Wisdom is in itself, meanwhile thou findest what she is in thyself.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

As there are degrees of wisdom, so of the fear of the Lord ; but there is no degree of this fear so inferior or low, but it is a beginning at least of wisdom ; and there is no degree of wisdom so high or perfect, but it hath its root in, or beginning, from this fear.—CARYL.

There is a slavish fear of God, springing from hard thoughts of Him, which is contrary to religion. There is a selfish fear of God, springing from dreadful thoughts of Him, which may be a good step towards religion. But there is a filial fear of God, springing from great and high thoughts of Him, which is the life and soul of all religion. It is wisdom and understanding. The wisdom of God appears in the institution of it, and the wisdom of man appears in the practice and observance of it. It is understanding, for it is the best knowledge of truth ; it is wisdom, for it is the best conduct of our affairs.—HENRY.

It you have learned to estimate things in some measure as God estimates them, you are in the path of wisdom.—G. BOWEN.

# A SOLILOQUY

## JOB'S SELF-EXAMINATION

*And Job again took up his  
parable, and said,*

*Oh that I were as in the  
months of old,*

*As in the days when God  
watched over me.*

*Job XXIX. 1-2.*

that which they had ventured to assume. We have here the picture of a rich and highly distinguished patriarch or chief of a tribe, who was happy only in spreading abroad happiness and blessing.

SCHLOTTMANN.

The Epicures held that a man might be cheerful amidst the most dreadful afflictions if he considered his honesty and integrity, such as Job did for his comfort, and if he remembered those pleasures and delights that formerly he had enjoyed, but Job setteth forth in this chapter how slight and slender is such comfort.

J. TRAPP.

In these chapters it is as though the storm-clouds are broken, and things stand out in their true light and just proportions, now that the struggles of contending emotions are passing away. Job does not, indeed, and cannot, comprehend the cause of his calamities, or reconcile them with what he could conjecture of the Almighty ; but he sees them as they are, and though he cannot express a hope, yet the tone of his pleading with God indicates a deep undercurrent of pious feeling, which suggests at least some preparation for hope, to a conscience singularly free from offence.

F. C. COOK.

### JOB'S CHARACTER

*I put on righteousness, and it clothed me :*

*My justice was as a robe and a diadem.*

*I was eyes to the blind,*

*And feet was I to the lame.*

*I was a father to the needy :*

*And the cause of him that I knew not I searched out.*

*Job XXIX. 14-16.*

**H**IS personal righteousness was as a robe of honour and a crown of glory to him. Literally, "It clothed itself with me"; first, righteousness is the garment, and then he is the garment to righteousness.—S. LEATHES.

Righteousness was as a robe to me, and I was as a robe to it. I put it on, and it put me on ; it identified itself with me.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

I joined and applied righteousness to all my actions, even as a garment to the body, and made it familiar and habitual to me. It did deck and adorn me with its lustre and brightness.—DIODATI.

Job declares that he could as little be drawn from doing justice as he could go abroad without his clothes.

J. TRAPP.

In the morning I put on a resolution to do justly, together with my clothes, and I never swerved from it all the day after ; but looked upon the righteous sentence which I pronounced as a greater ornament than the purple robe on my shoulder and the diadem upon my head.—BP. PATRICK.

I made it my habit. Robe and diadem are not mentioned as ornaments, but as expressing the completeness of the clothing : from head to foot attired in righteousness.—T. LEWIS.

When others do us open wrong, it is not vanity, but charity, to do ourselves open right ; and whatsoever

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## A SOLILOQUY

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appearance of folly or vain boasting there is in so doing, they are chargeable with all that compel us thereunto, and not we. It was neither pride nor passion in Job, but such a compulsion as this, that made him so often in this book proclaim his own righteousness.

This metaphor of clothing is much used in the Scriptures in this notion, as applied to the soul and things appertaining to the soul. By his speech of "putting on righteousness and judgment as a robe and a diadem," Job signifies that the glory and pride, which kings and potentates are wont to take in their crowns and sceptres and royal vestments, is not more than the glory and honour which he placed in doing justice and judgment. He considered that to be true honour, not which is reflected from these empty marks and ensigns of dignity, but which springs from those virtues, whereof these are but dumb remembrances. "He put on righteousness, and it clothed him : " and " judgment " was to him, what to others " a robe and a diadem " are, honourable and delightful.

In this and the three following verses we have to consider as laid down to us in the person, and from the example of Job, some of the principal duties which attend any situation of eminence or authority, either in Church or State ; more especially any office appertaining to the administration of justice ; a forwardness in the works of mercy, compassion, and charity ; diligence in examination ; and courage and resolution in executing,—BP. SANDERSON.

The turban and the full flowing outer mantle or robe are the prominent characteristics of an Oriental ruler's or high priest's dress. So Job's righteousness especially characterised him.—A. R. FAUSSET.

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### JOB'S PLEA

*Oh that I had one to hear me !  
(Lo, here is my signature, let  
the Almighty answer me ;)*

*And that I had the indictment which mine adversary  
hath written !*

*Surely I would carry it upon  
my shoulder ;*

*I would bind it unto me as a  
crown.*

*I would declare unto him the  
number of my steps ;*

*As a prince would I go near  
unto him.*

*Job XXXI. 35-37.*

HERE is my statement, fully drawn out, and attested by my own hand ; surely the righteous Judge will not leave this unanswered. As for the writing which my adversary would be bound to produce in court, my one wish is, that I had it ; far from fearing shame or dreading conviction, I would lay it on my shoulders as a badge of honour, or bear it as a crown upon my head. In the Court two documents would be required for a full and formal

investigation : the accuser's statement and the answer of the accused with his signature. This is the close of Job's speech. His integrity stands clear, and he presents himself for judgment.—F. C. COOK.

Let him that can accuse me, bring in his libel in writing against me. I will not endeavour to excuse it, but openly expose it to be read by all ; nay, I will wear it as a singular ornament, which would turn to my honour when the world saw it disproved. I myself would assist him to draw up his charge, by declaring to him freely every action of my life—"the number of my steps" ; I would approach him as undauntedly as a prince who is assured of the goodness of his cause.

BP. PATRICK.

Take it on my shoulder as a father doth his darling, or a standard-bearer his ensign.—J. TRAPP.

### JOB'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

*So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. . . .*

*Job XXXII. 1.*

SUCH was their unaltered judgment of him ; but it does not seem correct. For though he often dropped expressions unbecoming an erring and weak being, who could not comprehend the ways of Deity, yet he never pleaded that he was perfectly righteous ; he merely maintained that he was upright, and neither a hypocrite nor wicked man.

A. B. DAVIDSON.

In the expression “ because he seemed to be just in his own eyes,” the author of this sacred history intended to refer to the opinion of Job’s friends, and did not himself accuse him of being puffed up with pride.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

On the other hand, there are those who hold that self-righteousness was Job’s sin. There are many points of resemblance between Job and St. Paul, who, before his conversion, “ had lived in all good conscience before God,” but who confessed that he was blamable in seeking justification in himself. And St. Paul, like Job, suffered an affliction which he would fain have had God remove, but it remained. “ My grace is sufficient for thee ; for My strength is perfected in thy weakness.”

BP. WORDSWORTH.

And now he and his friends alike are silent, silent but unconvinced. Neither the one side nor the other have won the adhesion, even the modified adhesion, of those against whom they argue. They cannot point to any guilt on Job’s part. He cannot convince them of his innocence. Neither one side nor the other have, we cannot but feel, laid their hands upon the whole

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truth. Yet each has exhausted his store of arguments.

G. G. BRADLEY.

Here ends the controversy between Job and his friends. The grand question in debate between them was, Whether Job was a sinner and a hypocrite, or not. Both parties draw their arguments from the providence of God, which they both agreed could not act wrongly. The friends represent the extraordinary calamities as a visible judgment on Job for his sins ; and because he had none that were public and notorious, they at first insinuate, and afterwards plainly assert, that he must needs have been guilty of some secret sin, for that God never afflicts in so remarkable a manner, but for sins of great magnitude. Job, on the other hand, defends himself, by setting before them another view of Providence. He denies an exact retributive justice in this life, arguing from the general course of it. They argued chiefly from extraordinary exceptions. They had seen a good man sometimes remarkably delivered, and oftentimes a wicked man remarkably punished. But he bids them reflect, how many they had known who were notoriously wicked, and had nevertheless prospered a long time, and no extraordinary calamity befell them in the course of their lives, nor in their deaths. And though it was not so easy to discern who were really good (a bad inside being often covered by a good outside), yet he bids them consider what ravages were sometimes made, either by the pestilence or the sword ; and they must needs be convinced that many good men must unavoidably suffer with the bad, in such great and general devastations. So that no certain conclusion could be drawn of men's being either good or bad, from what they enjoyed or what they suffered in this world.—DR. HALES.

# A BYSTANDER INTERVENES

## ELIHU SPEAKS

*Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram : against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. . . .*

*And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old ;*

*Wherefore I held back, and durst not shew you mine opinion.*

*Job XXXII. 2, 6.*

same race with Job. His utterances most remarkably approximate to the fundamental features of the New Testament revelation of salvation.—O. ZÖCKLER.

Elihu represents a kindred people to the other speakers, but not the same ; as if in a dialogue of English personages an American were to interpose.

R. G. MOULTON.

Elihu is the St. Stephen of the Patriarchal Church.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

At this crisis Elihu comes in ; he has a different theory to propose. The divine chastisements have a loving purpose. They are intended to awaken a man's conscience, and to save him from destruction ; they make him feel the want of a mediator, and prepare him for spiritual ministrations, which, if received in humility, give him right views of God and righteousness.

F. C. COOK.

A THIRD party, listening calmly to two disputants often sees much that is faulty on both sides which escapes the notice of the persons themselves.—A. R. FAUSSET.

The Elihu section forms a kind of side-chapel in relation to the whole structure.

W. T. DAVISON.

The detailed account of Elihu's genealogy is undoubtedly a little singular, but it may be satisfactorily explained by the poet's desire to represent him as a kinsman of the

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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Elihu sees much deeper into the mystery of affliction than the three former friends. He is much more discreet and reasonable in his discourse with Job than the others ; he does not make him out a hypocrite, or one who is evidently ungodly, but he shows how by affliction God would purge him of all reliance on his own righteousness.—STARKE.

We may infer the wisdom of Elihu, both from his silence and from his speech. Lest anyone should say to him, Why did you not sooner plead for God ? he answers by an appeal to his youth, and says, I was silent because I waited for an apology for God from you. Observe, then, that Elihu was altogether exempt from all feeling of vain-glory ; that Elihu is contrasted with the other three friends of Job, inasmuch as he does not charge Job with being a sinner, or ascribe his afflictions to his supposed sins, as they do, and that he is indignant against them for their rash and uncharitable judgment.

CHRYSOSTOM.

Elihu, better acquainted both with human nature and the nature of the divine law, and of God's moral government of the world, steps in, and makes the proper discriminations ; acquits Job on the ground of their accusations, but condemns him for his too great self-confidence, and his trusting too much in his external righteousness ; and, without duly considering his frailty and imperfections, his incautiously arraigning the providence of God of unkindness in its dealings with him. This was the point on which Job was particularly vulnerable, and which Elihu very properly clears up.—A. CLARKE.

When it is said that Elihu waited while Job was speaking, because they who were speaking were his elders, it is plain that he observed this respect to Job

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not out of reverence for him, but for his friends. Elihu represents the class of teachers who are faithful, but arrogant—who, in the end, are reprovèd for saying right things in the wrong way.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

The impression which this long introductory discourse makes on the reader is not favourable; Elihu's self-praise, and his verbose vaunting of that which he is about to do, is somewhat unseemly.—DILLMANN.

He is too positive and dogmatic, and much overrates his own powers. He represents the dogmatism of a purified orthodoxy, which thinks too much of its minute advances.—CHEYNE.

Elihu, a young prophet; intemperate, bold, alone wise, draws fine pictures, without end or aim; hence no one answers him, and he stands there as a mere shadow. His speech is the weak, rambling talk of a boy.—HERDER.

The uncalled-for stumbling in of a conceited young philosopher into a conflict that is already properly ended, and the silent contempt with which he is allowed to speak, is the merited reward of a babbler.—UMBREIT.

When the opponents of Job had been put to silence, Elihu takes up the subject, and blames both parties: Job for having been hurried away, by the violence of his feelings, "to strive against God"; his three adversaries for having brought charges against Job which they could not prove. He solves the question between them, by affirming that calamity is not to be regarded as an evidence of guilt; but still, that even in the good there lurks a certain taint of sin of which themselves are not conscious; and that this must be corrected by some severe remedy, lest the righteous fall insensibly into impiety; moreover, these are salutary inflictions, not punishments.—ROSENMÜLLER.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### THE SPIRIT OF MAN

*There is a spirit in man,  
And the breath of the Al-  
mighty giveth them under-  
standing.*

*It is not the great that are  
wise,  
Nor the aged that understand  
judgement.*

*Job XXXII. 8-9.*

ELIHU means to say that it is not years so much as the spirit and illumination of the Almighty that maketh a man pre-eminent in wisdom.

S. LEATHES.

It undoubtedly means a divine influence, called "the inspiration of the Almighty."

What Elihu referred to was something which his three friends had, by their false reasoning, showed that they did not possess ; and as he presumes to no mental or moral superiority over them, we must conclude that he lays claim to the gift of inspiration by the Spirit of God. And he seems to speak of this gift as known to be granted man, which opinion is consistent with the character of the patriarchal age, when God appears to have frequently instructed men by supernatural revelations.—A. B. DAVIDSON.

I said, as in good manners I ought, those who are ancient and full of days should speak ; and those who had the experience of many years should be most able to teach wisdom to such as are younger ; but I see, all is not in age ; there is a Spirit of God which, breathing where it listeth, maketh a difference in men.—BP. HALL.

If the Divine Spirit be not intended, it is that in man which is most akin to it—the rational principle, or the Reason, in the highest sense that can be given to the word.—T. LEWIS.

Although arts and age be good helps to knowledge, yet they must be all taught of God that shall be wise unto salvation ; and such as these, the older they grow

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the wiser they are. Though knowledge be the daughter of time, it doth not always fall out that the most aged are the most learned. Wisdom doth not ever lean upon a staff nor look through spectacles. Experience giveth us to see both old fools and young wise men.—J. TRAPP.

It is an understanding spirit, able to discover and receive truth, to discourse and reason upon it, to direct and rule accordingly.—HENRY.

It is the Divine inspiration which giveth understanding.—BP. PATRICK.

Every man hath a mind, but it is the inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding.—COVERDALE.

If any man think I undertake a task too difficult for my years, I trust, through the supreme enlightening assistance, it will prove to be far otherwise.—MILTON.

The mind may experience the infinite in itself; in the human individual there sometimes arises a Divine spark which reveals to him the existence of the original fundamental Being.—AMIEL.

By no human resources, by no faculty of reason even in its highest vigour, by no spirit of the world, by no supports of human learning and eloquence, accumulate them in what manner and to what extent he pleases, is man enabled to soar to the designs and acts of God, placed as they are far above all human reason, in His own absolute reason and will. These things are known to the Divine Spirit alone, and to those who are inspired by the same Spirit. They that are untouched by the breathing of the Divine Spirit must needs want the power of vision wherewith to discern the heavenly mysteries.—J. COLET.

Do not consider whether I who speak am younger, but whether I speak the language of a prudent man.

MENANDER.

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### THE VOICE OF GOD

*For God speaketh once,  
Yea, twice, though man re-  
gardeth it not.*

*In a dream, in a vision of the  
night,*

*When deep sleep falleth upon  
men,*

*In slumberings upon the bed ;  
Then he openeth the ears of  
men,*

*And sealeth their instruction,  
That he may withdraw man  
from his purpose,*

*And hide pride from man.*

*Job XXXIII. 14-17.*

“ Purpose ” in this passage is used in a bad sense, as mischief.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Elihu’s argument is that when God has communicated His will, and man in prosperity heeds it not, He sealeth it to them in affliction.—A. R. FAUSSET.

God speaking “ once, twice,” certainly means, that He reveals His mind by inspiration, or by providence, so frequently and plainly, that what He designs or desires is not left doubtful.—A. B. DAVIDSON.

The “ deep sleep ” of the text clearly denotes something different from ordinary slumber. On the other hand, the dreams here spoken of are supposed to come from within the soul itself, as from its deeper being, or, as the voice of God in it, or from some plane above, when the sleep is of such a nature that the outer world is wholly excluded.—T. LEWIS.

By inward communications in the dead silence of the night, He awakens the conscience. He opens their

THY complaint of God’s silence is groundless. He pleads with man by the voice of conscience and visions, delivering him from the peril of pride and self-righteousness, and saving him from destruction. He not only openeth the ear and giveth instruction like a letter from heaven to man, but he sealeth the Divine message with His own seal. He avouches it as the word, and confirms it by His Spirit.

“ Purpose ” in this passage is

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minds to spiritual truth, sealing it by making the man feel by whom it is sent and for what purpose. The real object is one of love, not of wrath, as Job and his opponents had throughout assumed, but to make a man give up some wrong purpose, or put away pride.

F. C. COOK.

What is meant by the word of God being made known to us in dreams, except that we do not learn the secret things of God, if we are kept awake by worldly desires? For in a dream the outward senses are at rest, and inward objects are discerned. If we wish then to contemplate things within, let us rest from outward engagements. The voice of God, in truth, is heard as if in dreams, when, with minds at ease, we rest from the bustle of this world, and the Divine precepts are pondered by us in the deep silence of the mind. For when the mind is at rest from outward employments, the weight of the Divine precepts is more fully discerned. It is then that the mind penetrates, in a more lively manner, the words of God, which it refuses to admit within the tumult of worldly cares. A crowd of earthly thoughts, when it clamours around, closes the ear of the mind, and the voice of the heavenly Judge is less plainly heard in the secret tribunal of the mind. For a man when distracted is not fully equal to attend to both voices together. While he seeks for inward instruction let him not be engaged in outward employments, lest by opening his ear to things without, he becomes deaf within. Hence it is that holy men, who are obliged by the necessity of their employments to engage in outward pursuits, are ever studiously betaking themselves to the secrets of their hearts.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

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### THE MINISTRY OF PAIN

*He is chastened also with  
pain. . . .*

*Job XXXIII. 19.*

THIS is the second method in which God strives with man for his good. Pain is sent to him by God, as a merciful Father, in love, to wean man from pride and presumption, and to save him from destruction, and to draw him nearer to Himself. Elihu agrees with Job's friends in recognising that all suffering is a punishment, but diverges from them in that he shows suffering to have another aspect, an aspect of *love*. There is a suffering which has its origin, not merely in the Divine Righteousness, but, at the same time also, in the Divine Goodness; and which therefore may be inflicted on the righteous, in order that he may see, and be purified from, the sin still cleaving to him, and be fitted for the higher blessings of Redemption.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Look upon thy afflictions as on so many wayward and touchy guests, which while they stay watch every member, but when they depart they pay freely.

J. TRAPP.

Thou art a great man, but how shall I know it, if fortune give thee not an opportunity of proving thy virtue? No man, not even thyself, can know thy value, for a man must make proof of himself. No man knows his own ability except he make trial of it. God has a care of those men, whom He desires to make the most honourable, as often as He gives them an occasion to do anything stoutly and manfully, to the performance of which there requires some difficulty and danger. Calamity is an occasion to show virtue.—SENECA.

Who trusts in God fears not His rod.—GOETHE.

### THE ANGEL INTERPRETER

*If there be with him an angel,  
An interpreter, one among a  
thousand,  
To shew unto man what is  
right for him ;  
Then he is gracious unto him,  
and saith,  
Deliver him from going down  
to the pit,  
I have found a ransom.*

*Job XXXIII. 23-24.*

other patriarchs felt the full significance of their own words or not, they use no expressions which are unsuitable to the true and only Mediator.—F. C. COOK.

The angelic form is the oldest form which the hope of a deliverer assumes, and Elihu postulates that the deliverance of man can be effected only by a super-human being, as it is in reality accomplished by the Man who is at the same time and from all eternity the Lord of the angels of light.—DELITZSCH.

This is the third and crowning work of all, in God's gracious dispensations to man ; and without this, all the other methods are imperfect : for how can man, who is corrupt by nature, and sinful in act and habit, be reconciled to an All-holy God without a Mediator and Intercessor ? The sense is, If there be an angel ; in a primary sense this may mean, a human intercessor ; but in the full depth of its meaning it signifies " the ANGEL of JEHOVAH," the ANGEL REDEEMER, the Son of God Himself.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Who is this Angel, but He who is called by the

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Prophet Isaiah, "The Angel of Mighty Counsel"? Because "to declare" is called "evangelise" in Greek, the Lord in announcing Himself to us is called "Angel."

GREGORY THE GREAT.

He is happy, if there be a messenger with him to attend him in his sickness, to convince, counsel, and comfort him; an interpreter to expound the providence, and give him to understand the meaning of it; a man of wisdom that knows the voice of the rod and its interpretation; for many a time when God speaks by afflictions, we are so unversed in the language, that we have need of an interpreter; and it is well if we have such a one. The advice and help of a good minister is as needful and seasonable, and should be as acceptable in sickness, as of a good physician; especially if he be well skilled in the art of explaining and improving providences, which if he be, he is one of a thousand, and to be valued accordingly. Those shall be delivered from going down to the pit who receive God's messengers, and rightly understand His interpreters, so as to subscribe to His uprightness. "A ransom," so Elihu calls Him, as Job had called him his "Redeemer," for He is both the purchaser and the price. This is a ransom of God's finding, a contrivance of infinite wisdom; we could never have found it ourselves, and the angels themselves could never have found it; it is the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom; and such an invention as is and will be the everlasting wonder of those principalities and powers that desire to look upon it. Observe how God glories in the invention: "I have found, I have found" the ransom; I, even I, am He that hath done it.

HENRY.

HE KNOWETH THY WAYS

*For his eyes are upon the  
ways of a man,*

*And he seeth all his goings.*

*Job XXXIV. 21.*

HE cannot be suspected,  
through ignorance of  
their actions, to do them any  
injustice.—BP. PATRICK.

Although one man knoweth  
not another, nor doth any man well know himself ; yet  
God, following, as it were, all men hard at their heels,  
doth with His eyes narrowly observe and mark what  
way everyone walketh in, and seeth all His goings.

J. TRAPP.

All things are naked and open—dissected or  
anatomised—unto His eyes. He hath at once as exact  
a view of the most hidden things as if they had been  
with never so great curiosity anatomised before Him.

R. ALLEINE.

I may hide Thee from my eye, but not myself from  
Thine eye.—AUGUSTINE.

He knows every step, every right step and every  
by-step. He knows what rule we walk by, what end we  
walk toward, and what company we walk with.

P. YOUNG.

We fall before Him as often as we stumble away  
from the straight path.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

He knows the works of man, and has grounds for  
acting as He does.—S. LEATHES.

He not only looks on them, but He never looks off  
them. Though that befalls them which looks like an  
oversight of Providence, the tender, careful eye of the  
Heavenly Father is never withdrawn.—HENRY.

He has no need to go through man's tedious processes  
of judicial investigation ; He sees and knows all things  
at once.—A. R. FAUSSET.

### HE ENLARGETH THY HEART

*He delivereth the afflicted by  
his affliction,*

*And openeth their ear in op-  
pression.*

*Yea, he would have led thee  
away out of distress*

*Into a broad place, where  
there is no straitness ;*

*And that which is set on thy  
table should be full of fatness.*

*Job XXXVI. 15-16.*

TO open the ear in tribulation, is to open the hearing of the heart, by the affliction of blows. Tribulation opens the ear of the heart, which this world's prosperity often closes.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

He is instigating and impelling thee by means of thy affliction into a state of greater glory and happiness. He is

impelling thee forward to thy good, from a narrow passage into a large room, if thou receivest aright His fatherly chastisement.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

Their affliction is the very means of their deliverance.—F. C. COOK.

He opens their ears, and makes them to hear joy and gladness, even in their oppressions ; while He doth not yet deliver them, He speaks to them good words and comfortable words, for the encouragement of their faith and patience, the silencing of their fears, and the balancing of their griefs. It ought to silence us under our afflictions to consider that if we were better, it would be every way better with us ; if we had answered the ends of an affliction, the affliction would be removed : and deliverance would come if we were ready for it. God would have done well for us, if we had carried ourselves well.—HENRY.

God hath enlarged my heart with joy and comfort when I was like a man imprisoned with grief and sorrow.—C. H. SPURGEON.

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## A BYSTANDER INTERVENES

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### CONSIDER HIS WORKS

*Hearken unto this, O Job :  
Stand still, and consider the  
wondrous works of God.*

*Job XXXVII. 14.*

AT first sight it may seem surprising that the mind of the righteous sufferer is directed by Elihu, and by Jehovah Himself, to the wondrous formation of the clouds, to thunder, lightning, and snow, and to the war-horse, the hawk, and the eagle. But when we examine the matter more carefully, we see that such a course of reasoning is excellently fitted to its purpose. An Almighty and All-wise God, who is not at the same time righteous, is in truth an inconceivable impossibility. How can the Being who everywhere shows Himself in Creation to be most perfect, be defective in this one point? Every witness therefore in *Nature* to God's greatness as a *Creator* rises against an arraignment of God's *righteousness*. Whoso will bring a charge against God's justice must measure himself with the Divine Omnipotence.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

Howsoever diligent men are about their own works, they are slow enough—too slow—to take notice of the works of God. Often the purpose of God in keeping us at any time from our work is that we may know more of His works. For His works, the common, constant, and ordinary works of God, are full of wonders.

CARYL.

Here Elihu by little and little draweth to a most wise conclusion, bringing Job to this point, that as the wisdom of God in these daily and ordinary works of nature doth far exceed the reach and capacity of man, so he should much more consider the same in this grievous calamity which was now befallen him. Prick

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up the ears of thy faith, he saith, which alone hath skill of these mysteries ; whereunto if thou hast yet no insight, and canst not yet feel the justice, wisdom, and goodness of God in thy present sufferings, it is because thou hast not habitually exercised thy senses to discern good and evil. A cunning artisan, finding a curious piece of work, and being wondered at by one, and asked, What pleasure he could take to stand gazing as he did on the picture ? answered, Hadst thou mine eyes thou wouldst not wonder. Elihu seemeth here to say as much to Job.—J. TRAPP.

There are some who consider the wondrous works of God, but lying down. They do not admire and follow the power of His doings. They turn indeed their eyes in consideration, but they do not raise themselves from the earth, or stand ready to be moved by them.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

This, which is called the universe, has been arranged and is governed by a certain wonderful foresight and wisdom.—PLATO.

The evidences of the Divine Presence throng on his eyes and mind ; the incomprehensible glory and excellency of God confound all his powers of reasoning and description ; he cannot arrange his words by reason of darkness ; and he concludes with stating, that to poor weak man God must for ever be incomprehensible, and a subject of deep religious fear and reverence. Just then, the terrible majesty of the Lord appears ! Elihu is silent ! The rushing mighty wind, for which the description of the thunder and lightning had prepared poor, confounded, astonished Job, proclaims the presence of Jehovah : and out of this whirlwind God answers for and proclaims Himself !

A. CLARKE.

# THE DIVINE REVELATION

## GOD DRAWS NEAR

*Then the Lord answered Job  
out of the whirlwind.*

*Job XXXVIII. 1.*

THE disputants had enveloped themselves in a cloud of words. A whirlwind must now scatter it.

G. GILFILLAN.

The object of these orations of Jehovah is not to communicate intellectual light, but to give a stronger tone to Job's nature. He had long known God to be strong and wise and good, but more as a lesson learned than as personal experience.—CHEYNE.

He brings home to him the limitation of his outlook, so that Job comes to learn the whole range of God's interest. And as we reflect more deeply we see a relevance in the Divine speeches that at first we are apt to miss. Much of the mischief with Job lay in his self-absorption. He dwells on God's immoral control of the lot of man, but even more specially on God's immoral treatment of himself. God bids the self-centred sufferer look away at the wide universe, then he will come to a juster estimate of man's place. If Job looks at the sentient life of the world, he will realise that man is only one among many of the objects of God's concern. By confronting him with Nature, God has taken him out of himself, and convinced him of his relative significance. Yet even that is not the chief thing. To men oppressed by the mystery of their own or the world's pain, the explanation of an individual case is of little worth, unless it admits of wider application. For Job himself the explanation is unneeded. He has received a new experience. It is the vision of God which has released him from his problem. His suffering is as mysterious as ever, but plain or mysterious, why should it vex him any longer? He has

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seen God, and has entered into rest. The only answer we can get to the problem of pain is, the poet would tell us, this answer. The soul's certainty is the soul's secret.—A. S. PEAKE.

When we read that "Jehovah answered Job out of the tempest," we forthwith ask, "And what did He say?" expecting to hear some conclusive argument that will pour the light of eternal wisdom on the difficulties and perplexities of human life: we overlook the immense pathos and force of the fact, *that Jehovah spake to Job at all*. And yet, so soon as we think of it, it is easy to believe that, if Job had not understood a single word Jehovah uttered, the mere fact that Jehovah spoke to him would excite a rush of emotion before which all memory of his doubts and miseries would be carried away as with a flood. *This*, indeed, was that which Job had craved throughout. What he could not bear was that *God* should abandon him, *abandon* as well as afflict him, that when he cried for pity or redress Heaven should not respond.—S. Cox.

Contrary to expectation, God begins to speak with Job about totally different matters from His justice or injustice in reference to his affliction. Therein already lies a deep humiliation for Job. But a still deeper one is God's turning, as it were, to the A.B.C. of Nature, and putting the censurer to the blush. That God is the Almighty and All-wise Creator and Ruler of the world, that the natural world is exalted above human knowledge and power, and is full of marvellous Divine creations and arrangements, full of things mysterious and incomprehensible to ignorant and feeble man, Job knows even before God speaks, and yet he must now hear it, because he does not know it rightly; for the Nature with which he is acquainted as the herald of

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## THE DIVINE REVELATION

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the creative and governing power of God is also the preacher of humility ; and exalted as God the Creator and Ruler of the natural world is above Job's censure, so is He also as the author of Job's affliction. That which is new therefore in the speech of Jehovah is not the proof of God's exaltation in itself, but the relation to the mystery of his affliction, and to his conduct towards God in this his affliction, in which Job is compelled to place perceptions not in themselves strange to him. He who cannot answer a single one of those questions taken from the natural kingdom, but, on the contrary, must everywhere admire and adore the power and wisdom of God, must appear absurdly foolish if he attempts with his limited knowledge to judge the Author of his affliction. From the marvellous in Nature, Job divines that which is marvellous in his affliction. His humiliation under the mysteries of Nature is at the same time humiliation under the mystery of his affliction.—DELITZSCH.

He makes Job feel the absolute foolishness and childishness of what he had expected from God. The whole arrangement of the poem forbids us to doubt that only in these speeches of Jehovah, and nowhere else, have we to seek the solution of the problem. In all conceivable simplicity it runs thus : God, who has made known His unfathomable omnipotence and wisdom in the multiform wonders of creation, and His goodness in His loving care for the animal world, rules likewise over the fortunes of men, and here too all His action can flow only from wisdom and love, whether much or little of it be comprehensible by man.—E. KAUTZSCH.

Job was to rise to a higher spiritual altitude, and human efforts alone could not accomplish that. God must reveal Himself to him.—BP. WORDSWORTH.

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## THE STUDY BIBLE

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### DECLARE THOU UNTO ME

*Gird up now thy loins like a man ;*

*For I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.*

*Job XXXVIII. 3.*

**I**T is I who ask of thee, not thy dark and erring friends ; I, who have come, not to reveal any plans or counsels, not to solve a problem, or to decide a debate, but to make My glory to pass before thee—not to teach thee My wisdom or skill in nature, but to strengthen thy faith in My omnipotence.—T. LEWIS.

I will be thy opponent since thou hast challenged Me, and prove thee with hard questions, whereunto, if thou canst give no answer, thou shalt see thine own folly.—J. TRAPP.

Those who go about to call God to account must expect to be called to account themselves.—HENRY.

Our Maker is wont to question us in three ways : when He strikes us with the severity of the rod, and shows what great patience exists either in, or is wanting to, us. Or when He enjoins certain things which we dislike, and lays open our obedience or disobedience. Or when He discloses to us some hidden truths and conceals others, and makes known to us the measure of our humility. Whence Job is now, after the questioning of the rod, examined by the questioning of the word, to make him consider the things that are above ; and in order that, when he does not comprehend them, he may turn back to himself, and learn how feeble he is in comparison with heavenly things. It is as if God had plainly said, I rouse thee by My words to consider sublime truths, and whilst thou perceivest that thou knowest not these things that are above thee, I make thee better known to thyself.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

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## THE DIVINE REVELATION

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### THE DAWN

*Hast thou commanded the  
morning since thy days began,  
And caused the dayspring to  
know its place ;*

*That it might take hold of the  
ends of the earth,*

*And the wicked be shaken out  
of it ?*

*It is changed as clay under the  
seal ;*

*And all things stand forth as  
a garment.*

*Job XXXVIII. 12-14.*

In the second sentence of the thirteenth verse the moral value of the morning to mankind is noticed, "The wicked are shaken out of it."—T. SCOTT.

The surface of the earth is considered as an outspread carpet ; the ends of which the dawn lifts as it rises suddenly, shaking out of it the evil-doers who ply their business upon it at night.—O. ZÖCKLER.

They are scared out of it, that is driven away to their lurking-places when light comes winging its way to the ends of the earth.—T. LEWIS.

The earth, which is like rude unformed clay in the night-time, is turned and applied to the light in the morning, as to a seal, and receives a beautiful impression from it, and all its objects stand forth to the view, like the lineaments and hues of a picture. The objects of the earth stand forth, when the morning sun has lighted them up, like a beautiful garment, embroidered with bright tissue and variegated colours.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

ALTHOUGH thou couldst  
not be a witness of the  
formation either of the earth  
or of the sea, because thou  
wast not then in being, I ask  
whether, since the period of  
thy birth, thou hast directed  
the returning light of day ?

R. JAMIESON.

The dayspring knew its  
place before we knew ours.

HENRY.

### THE STARS

*Canst thou bind the cluster of  
the Pleiades,  
Or loose the bands of Orion ?  
Canst thou lead forth the  
Mazzaroth in their season ?  
Or canst thou guide the Bear  
with her train ?*

*Job XXXVIII. 31-32.*

**H**AST thou brought the seven stars together ? Or, art thou able to break the circle of heaven ? Canst thou bring forth the morning star, or the evening star, at convenient time, and convey them home again ?—COVERDALE.

Mazzaroth are those clusters of stars which are commonly called the Zodiac.

CHRYSOSTOM.

Knowest thou what laws God hath made for the motions and influences of the heavens ; and what power He hath given to their operations on the earth ?

BP. HALL.

Canst thou tie together that constellation in its cluster, or canst thou loose them when bound ? Some have supposed a reference here to the chains by which Orion was imagined to be bound to the firmament.

BP. WORDSWORTH.

Canst thou forbid the sweet flowers to come forth when the seven stars arise in the spring ; or open the earth for the husbandman's labour, when the winter season, at the rising of Orion, ties up their hands ?

BP. PATRICK.

By these constellations, which are more celebrated than all the stars in the firmament of heaven, it is signified, that the whole system of the heavenly bodies is under the governance of God.—BEDE.

It is but the outer hem of God's great mantle our poor stars do gem.—RUSKIN.

## THE HORSE

*Hast thou given the horse his  
might ?*

*Hast thou clothed his neck  
with the quivering mane ?*

*Job XXXIX. 19.*

THE great Creator, who accommodated Himself to those He vouchsafed to speak to, hath put into the mouths of His prophets such sublime sentiments and exalted language as must abash the pride and wit of man. In the Book of Job, the most ancient poem in the world, we have such paintings and descriptions in great variety. The description of the horse in particular, under all the disadvantages of having been written in a language little understood ; of being expressed in phrases peculiar to a part of the world whose manner of thinking and speaking seems to us very uncouth ; and, above all, of appearing in a prose translation ; is nevertheless so transcendently above all heathen descriptions, notwithstanding there are two very fine ones by Homer and Virgil, that hereby we may perceive how faint and languid the images are, which are formed by mortal authors, when compared with that which is figured, as it were, just as it appears in the eye of the Creator. In this description are all the great and sprightly images that thought can form of this generous beast, expressed in such force and vigour of style as would have given the great wits of antiquity new laws for the sublime, had they been acquainted with these writings. I cannot but particularly observe, that whereas the classical poets chiefly endeavour to paint the outward figure, lineaments, and motions ; the sacred poet makes all the beauties to flow from an inward principle in the creature he describes, and thereby gives great spirit and vivacity to his description.—STEELE.

## THE BEHEMOTH

*Behold now behemoth, which  
I made with thee.*

*Job XL. 15.*

AS a plural intensive the word denotes the largest, fiercest, and most formidable of beasts.—R. JAMIESON.

More than one animal may be meant in the description (vers. 15–24), which scarcely seems to answer to one and the same. In this way the vers. 15–20 would describe very well the elephant, and vers. 21–24 the hippopotamus. The objection to this is, that behēmāh is commonly used of domestic cattle in contrast to wild beasts. There is a word in Coptic used for the hippopotamus which may, perhaps, lie concealed in behemoth. Then the difficulty is to make the description answer throughout to the hippopotamus.—S. LEATHES.

I do not believe that either the elephant or the river-horse is intended, but that the animal here described is now extinct.—A. CLARKE.

That which alone can help us to a correct appreciation of the poet's purpose is the truth, flowing from the view of nature presented throughout the Scriptures, that the entire animal world is a gallery of pictures, collected for men by God Himself, to symbolise, or reflect in pictorial form, truths of deep ethical or religious significance.—O. ZÖCKLER.

In order that Job may learn to think humbly of his own strength, God now proceeds to reveal to him with *what a powerful enemy* he has to contend ; and in the sentence which follows, He displays to Job all the machinations of that spiritual adversary.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

Thou, who darest to set thyself up against the Creator, and to condemn Him of injustice, as if thou

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## THE DIVINE REVELATION

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wert the lord and judge of the universe, try, if thou canst, to cope with one of His creatures. This is the primary sense. But there is also a secondary, spiritual meaning.

Why the Behemoth and Leviathan are chosen here, as the special subjects of God's interrogation of Job, is a question which does not lie on the surface of the letter, but reaches to the lower depth of Divine mysteries. We must indeed hold fast the literal sense ; but if we limit ourselves to it, and forgo the spiritual, we may be in danger of falling into error.

No reverent reader of this Book, who remembers that it is full of deep spiritual mysteries, can fail to feel, that at the conclusion of this sublime speech, uttered by the Lord Jehovah Himself, speaking to Job with such fearful demonstrations of Divine majesty, there must be something far more profound and awful than an appeal to two animals such as the hippopotamus and the crocodile. This would be an inconceivable bathos. Something grander is here—something fitted to the great moral and spiritual teaching of this Divine Book.

Expositors have endeavoured to identify the " Behemoth " with the hippopotamus, and the " Leviathan " with the crocodile ; and it cannot be doubted that there are many points of resemblance between them respectively. But it seems to be a narrow kind of criticism, to attempt to confine these words to these two animals ; and it ought to be borne in mind that two words of wide and comprehensive signification, " Behemoth " and " Leviathan," appear to have been purposely adopted in the Hebrew text, to guard against such a servile limitation. In no passage of the Bible is the word " Behemoth," which is of frequent occurrence,

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to be limited to the hippopotamus ; nor is the word " Leviathan " to be limited to the crocodile. These words do not merely represent two genera of animals, but they are also symbolical exponents of two great principles and powers. It is affirmed, with a remarkable consent of ancient expositors, that the " Behemoth " and " Leviathan " represent powers which man cannot tame and subdue by his own strength.

Many ancient interpreters see in Behemoth, as well as in Leviathan, a figurative representation of our spiritual enemy. To speak more precisely, it seems probable that " Behemoth " represents the Evil One acting in the animal and carnal elements of man's own constitution, and that " Leviathan " symbolises the Evil One energising as his external enemy. Behemoth is the enemy *within* us, Leviathan is the enemy *without* us.

The word " Behemoth," according to its Hebrew analogy, expresses the aggregate of what is animal in man, as distinguished from what is spiritual. Therefore the question of the Almighty to Job, and to all men, is this—Canst thou by thine own strength tame the Behemoth of thine own carnal nature ?

Although we must hold fast to the literal sense in expounding the above words, yet the spiritual sense, when it affords profitable instruction, and when it imparts a dignity and propriety to the language, suitable to the occasion, is carefully to be considered.

God is declaring to man, in Job, the weakness of his nature. Canst thou subdue thy enemy in the Behemoth of thine own carnal nature from within thee ? Canst thou overcome him, assailing thee as the Leviathan from without ?—BP. WORDSWORTH.

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# THE DIVINE REVELATION

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## THE LEVIATHAN

*Canst thou draw out leviathan  
with a fish hook?*

*Job XLI. 1.*

THE word "leviathan" signifies a creature wreathed or folded. In Isa. xxvii. 1 it means a serpent; in Ps. civ. 26 it is some monster of the sea; here it is allowed by all to be the crocodile of the Nile. The description in the first section of the chapter is simple and literally applicable; in the latter it is poetical.—A. BARRY.

The word denotes a dragon, or a piercing and crooked serpent.—R. JAMIESON.

A twisted animal gathered together in folds.

A. R. FAUSSET.

These two pictures from the animal world are intended to teach Job how little he is capable of passing sentence upon the evil-doer, seeing he cannot even draw a cord through the nose of the behemoth, and who, if he attempted to attack the leviathan, would have reason to remember it as long as he lived, and would henceforth let it alone.—DELITZSCH.

In a spiritual sense these words, Behemoth and Leviathan, represent the power of the evil one.

GREGORY NAZIANZUS.

In the beginning of the book, Satan is revealed to us as the author of Job's afflictions; and so, while Job's friends thought that the cause of Job's afflictions was in Job himself, and that he was being punished by God for his sins, the Lord, after He had reproved Job for his indiscreet language, puts an end to the debate by speaking of the malice of Satan, which was the source of Job's afflictions, and is the origin of man's condemnation.—THOMAS AQUINAS.

See also the notes on Behemoth, pp. 112-4.

# JOB'S REPLY

## HIS REPENTANCE

*Then Job answered the Lord,  
and said,*

*I know that thou canst do all  
things,*

*And that no purpose of thine  
can be restrained. . . .*

*Therefore have I uttered that  
which I understood not,*

*Things too wonderful for me,  
which I knew not. . . .*

*I had heard of thee by the  
hearing of the ear ;*

*But now mine eye seeth thee,  
Wherefore I abhor myself, and  
repent*

*In dust and ashes.*

*Job XLII. 1-3, 5-6.*

WE should stand not so much outside of Job listening to the Divine words, as within Job, before whose mental eye all this sublime panorama of mingled might and mercy floats, every shifting scene casting him lower to the dust.—A. B. DAVIDSON.

To trust God when we understand Him would be but a sorry triumph for religion. To trust God when we have every reason for distrusting Him, save our inward certainty of Him, is the supreme victory of religion. This is the victory which Job achieves. But

he can achieve it only as God takes the initiative and gives him the revelation of Himself.—A. S. PEAKE.

When God taketh in hand to teach a man he soon becometh a skilful scholar.—J. TRAPP.

The Spirit is not long in teaching those that commit themselves to His tuition.—AMBROSE.

Thy power is unlimited ; Thy wisdom is infinite. The light that discovers Thy glory and excellence, discovers my meanness and vanity.—A. CLARKE.

I rashly denied that Thou hadst any fixed plan in governing human affairs, merely because Thy plan was too wonderful for my comprehension.—A. R. FAUSSET.

Though in former days Job thought he knew God, it was but at second-hand ; now he knows Him as in

vivid direct vision ; he knows that His hand, His power, His goodness, are around man's path.—A. BARRY.

By these words Job plainly declares that as far as sight is superior to hearing, so far does the progress he had made through suffering differ from that which he was before. And because he had beheld more plainly the light of truth with the eye within, he more clearly discerned and beheld the darkness of his humanity. Whence it follows that he reproached himself ; for, the less a person knows himself, the less is he displeased with himself ; and the more he discerns the light of greater grace, the more blameworthy does he acknowledge himself to be. With great self-reproach Job is at variance with himself. The more men advance in the contemplation of God, the more they despise what they are, and know themselves to be, either nothing, or next to nothing. As he advances in wisdom, Job finds himself to be a fool. He is wounded and galled in his mind by the sharp stings of reproaches, but he does penance in ashes.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

There is no philosophy of life but the experience of it ; there is no knowledge of God until, in some way, we come completely into His hands. Sin and need and sorrow may drive us there, but only life itself, in all its length and depth and vicissitude and final emptiness, can fully place us there.—T. T. MUNGER.

We are usually better persuaded by reasons which we have ourselves discovered, than by those which have come into the minds of others.—PASCAL.

It seems to me that it has been the one purpose of all the Divine revelation or education of which we have any record to waken us up out of this perpetually recurring tendency to fall back into ourselves.

R. H. HUTTON.

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### HIS RESTORATION

*The Lord turned the captivity  
of Job, when he prayed for his  
friends.*

*Job XLII. 10.*

**H**IS prayer, as being the sign at once of acceptance with God and reconciliation with man, is made the end of his trial, and the first dawn of his new prosperity—A. BARRY.

He makes his prayers more powerful on his own behalf, who offers them also on behalf of others. For that sacrifice of prayer is more willingly received, which, in the sight of the merciful Judge, is flavoured with love for one's neighbour. And he who offers it for his enemies adds to its amount.—GREGORY THE GREAT.

Mercy did not return when he was disputing with his friends, no, not though he had right on his side, but when he was praying for them, for God is better served and pleased with our warm devotions than with our warm disputations.—HENRY.

It is not that Job needed his restoration, in order to regain his confidence in God. Had he been doomed to end his days in pain, he could walk through the valley in the memory of the vision of God. But then the reader would have been very unfavourably impressed by God's treatment of him. Now he feels that God has made amends to His loyal servant for the pain He has made him endure. To estimate the Epilogue aright we must not forget that the author had to keep the treatment of his subject within the limits of the earthly life, and could not work with the conception of a happy immortality. And we must remember that the compensation given to Job is to clear God's character, not in any way to reaffirm the old theory that the righteous must be fortunate.—A. S. PEAKE.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BOOK  
OF JOB

BY

W. G. JORDAN, D.D.

THE  
THIRD  
STUDY

Rev. William George Jordan, D.D., has just retired from the chair of Hebrew Language and Literature in Queen's University, Kingston, Canada, a post he has held for twenty-five years. Among his works are *Biblical Criticism and Modern Thought*, *Prophetic Ideas and Ideals*, *Ancient Hebrew Stories and their Modern Interpretation*, *History and Revelation*, and *Songs of Service and Sacrifice*.

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BOOK OF JOB <sup>1</sup>

## THE PLACE OF THE BOOK IN HEBREW HISTORY AND LITERATURE

BY W. G. JORDAN, D.D.

BY the common consent of all competent judges the Book of Job is one of the world's great books. A certain sublime grandeur and magnificent strength is apparent to those who give it only a passing glance, but, like other books that stand in the front rank of the world's literature, it does not yield up its secret to any superficial survey, and those who have given years to its study do not feel that they have completely mastered it. Admiration we may feel, but scarcely an intelligent appreciation unless we make an effort to set it in relation to the life of the Hebrew people and learn how, while expressing the problem of a particular period, it came to have a message for all time. Hebrew literature may be called both national and religious; always these two lines were closely united, and in the later stages the theological and religious interests became supreme.

The history and theology are represented in books written in the Hebrew language during the course of a thousand years, ending about two hundred years

<sup>1</sup> In the Authorized Version (1611) we have a noble translation of the Old Testament, which has had an immense influence on English literature; taking advantage of increased linguistic knowledge, the Revised Version (1884) gives real help to students, particularly in Job, where the text is often very difficult. *The Book of Job in Modern Speech*, by Dr. J. E. McFadyen (London, James Clarke & Co.), can be highly recommended as a piece of careful, scholarly work. In this article passages have been quoted from an interesting version by Tayler Lewis (Lange, N. G., 1874) which attempts to reproduce in English something of the rhythm of the original Hebrew poetry.

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before the beginning of the Christian era ; this small collection reflects the experience of this strange people in their attempts to conquer the land and to keep their own religion pure and strong. The Hebrew Canon, or Collection of Sacred Books, differs, in its arrangement, from that which we possess. First main division, the Torah, the five books of " the Law " ascribed to Moses, which we name " The Pentateuch " ; second, " the Prophets earlier and later," including the histories from Joshua to Kings, the three larger prophetic books Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the twelve small books that we call " the Minor Prophets." Then there comes a third, a miscellaneous collection into which are gathered the later histories (Chronicles), Daniel, poetic books, Psalms, Proverbs, and Canticles. It is in this division that we find the Book of Job, a division that was probably the latest to be completed and canonised. The questions concerning the date and the structure of the book are complicated and also closely related ; elaborate controversies on critical questions cannot be attempted in this brief statement ; they cannot be shirked altogether, but they must be touched only so far as they are essential to our interpretation of the book. We believe that Job is a Hebrew book in the full sense, that it was written in Palestine, by a man who was a Jew but who, on account of education and travel, had lost any narrow provincial tone ; it was written when the ancient language was still living, though there are signs of the growth of another dialect (Aramaic) which was later to displace it. But this means also that the subject of the book, and the method of treating it, are best explained from the belief that it arose about four hundred years before the coming of Jesus Christ. This point, to which we must return,

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is that in the life of the Hebrews, as in the life of any nation that has real history, there is movement backward and forward, with real progress, to which we now give the name "development." This does not mean that only in one period can a particular subject arise, but it does mean that each age discusses the ever-recurring subjects in its own style and tone. We learn that the subject of the Book of Job was discussed in Babylonia and Egypt centuries before the Hebrew people came on the world's stage. There is no need to doubt that such is the case, it would be strange if it were otherwise; probably the ancestors of the Hebrews discussed such problems in the desert in prehistoric times. The satire prevalent in Rome centuries ago and in London to-day may have much in common, but to the careful observer there is always the subtle touch and the atmospheric influence which give the temporal situation and the local colour. Many arguments and indications point toward this conclusion that the Book of Job belongs to a period not long after the Babylonian Exile (586-520 B.C.), when the energies of Jews in Jerusalem were concentrated more on religion than on politics and the spirit of free inquiry and poetic expression had not yet been completely deadened by the hard legalism which later began to prevail. For while the book is intensely personal in its tone, it is not devoid of national suggestion.

*The Contents and Structure of the Book.*—A. The Prologue (chs. i., ii.) contains the story of "the patient Job" (Jas. v. 11), who, in spite of the severest trials, the loss of his health and his children, maintains his faith in God. There is dramatic presentation of events

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that take place on earth and in heaven. The chief characters are God, the Adversary or Critic, and Job ; the question to be settled, " Is Job's piety pure and disinterested ? " The keynote of this section is found in the words of the sufferer :

All naked from my mother's womb I came,  
And naked there shall I again return,  
Jehovah gave, Jehovah takes away ;  
Jehovah's name be blessed. (i. 21.)

This attitude he maintains and to this spirit he holds fast in the face of his wife's unbelief and the sorrowful silence of his friends.

B. The Debate between Job and his three friends (iii.-xxxi.). This is the main part of the book. In fact some find here nearly the whole of the great poet's personal contribution. There are three cycles of speeches : Job speaks, and each of the three friends in turn answers him. It is strange that in the third series there is no reply from Zophar, that Bildad's speech (xxv.) is very short and that xxvi. would be more suitable to Bildad than to Job. Possibly Zophar's last speech has been dislocated. Ch. xxviii., a splendid poem in praise of Wisdom, is regarded by many scholars as a separate piece not involved in the great argument. It may have begun with the refrain :

But Wisdom, where shall it be found ?  
And where the place of clear intelligence ?  
(xxviii. 12, 20.)

It closes with the lesson that man's wisdom is to fear the Lord (cf. Eccl. xii. 13). Its statement (18) that

The wealth of Wisdom far excelleth pearls,  
With it the topaz gem of Cush holds no compare,

should be compared with similar praises of Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs.

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To these problems, concerned with what is called "the integrity of the book," learned commentaries must devote much space; fortunately for us their solution, one way or the other, does not affect very deeply our view of the writer's great genius or of the spirit by which he was inspired.

If we read the book continuously we must be surprised by the change from the calm patience shown in the popular story and the volcanic outburst of Job's first speech (iii.). As poetry, this speech is one of the finest pieces in the book. He curses the day on which he was about to be born and consigns it to perpetual darkness. He wishes that at birth he had gone to the home of the dead :

For there the wicked cease from troubling ;  
There the weary are at rest.  
There lie the captives all at ease ;  
The driver's voice they hear no more.  
The small and great alike are there ;  
The servant from his master free.

His complaint finds its climax in the question,

Oh, why does He give light to one in pain ?  
Or life to the embittered soul ?

To this Eliphaz the Temanite (iv.), the oldest of the three friends, replies in gentle complimentary style ; to him it is an impossibility that the wicked should continue to prosper or the good man be completely overthrown. This truth he claims to have received by revelation.

In troubled thoughts from spectres of the night,  
When falls on men the vision-seeing trance—  
And fear has come, and trembling dread,  
And made my every bone to thrill with awe.

(iv. 13, 14.)

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Such kindly expostulation does not yield much comfort, and in Job's next speech the weight of his sorrow is set forth with wonderful pathos and power.

Oh, could my grief be weighed,  
And poised against it, in the scale, my woe !  
For now it would be heavier than the sand ;  
And thence it comes, my incoherent speech ;  
For Shaddai's arrows are within my flesh ;  
Their poison drinketh up my soul ;  
God's terrors stand arrayed before my face.

(vi. 2-4.)

Is not man's life a warfare on the earth ?  
His day, the hireling's day ?  
As gasps the servant for the shadow's turn,  
As longs the toiler for his labour's end,  
So am I made the heir to months of wretchedness,  
And nights of pain they number out to me.

(vii. 1-3.)

Now a terrible thought, not easily conquered, seems to haunt the mind of Job, namely, that God takes delight in tormenting a weak mortal, one of His own creatures.

For what is man,  
That thou shouldst make him of so great account,  
That Thou shouldst set Thy heart upon him ?  
That Thou shouldst visit him each morning as it comes,  
And try him every moment ?

(vii. 17, 18.)

Bildad preaches the orthodox doctrine of retribution in a mechanical manner, suggesting that if Job's sons sinned, God gave them up to their own wickedness. He is a man of maxims and proverbs, placing his reliance on ancient tradition.

Ask now the generation gone before.  
Yes, of their fathers set thyself to learn.  
Will they not teach thee, speak to thee,  
In parables of deep experience ?

(viii. 8, 10.)

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Even this homely philosopher, in a way not out of date, seeks to base his strict dogmatism on the uncertain ground of man's ignorance.

For we are but of yesterday, and nothing know ;  
So like a shadow are our days on earth.

(viii. 9.)

Job replies that he knows full well the power of God, how terrible, how irresistible it is ; with reason one might deal, but not with power : one is reduced to trembling silence.

For He is not a man like me, that I should answer Him,  
In judgment, then, together we might come.  
But now there is no umpire that can chide,  
And lay his tempering hand upon us both.

(ix. 32, 33.)

Even in this condition he will plead with One who has created him so wonderfully. If God cannot visit him in kindness, then let Him—

Turn from me, that for a moment I may smile,  
Before I go, whence I shall not return.

(x. 20.)

Zophar, the youngest and roughest of the combatants, now lifts his voice in God's defence. He feels that he must answer Job's "flood of words." The poet places on his lips a splendid passage on the greatness of God, but it seems something of an anticlimax when all that comes out of it is the chilling thought of the ease with which the Almighty can detect man's slightest sin, followed by the usual commonplace words of "comfort."

Eloah's secret, canst thou find it out ?  
Or Shaddai's perfect way canst thou explore ?  
Higher than heaven's height, what canst thou do ?  
Deeper than Sheol's depths, what canst thou know ?  
Its measurement is longer than the earth,  
And broader than the sea.  
When He is passing by, and makes arrest,  
And calls to judgment, who can answer Him ?

(xi. 7-10.)

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To all this Job makes a spirited and sustained reply. Irritated by so much pretentious commonplace, which in his opinion does not touch the vital point, he cries out :

Ye are the people, there's no doubt :  
And wisdom dies with you.  
But I have understanding like yourselves.  
In nothing do I fall below your mark.  
Who knoweth not such things as these ?

(xii. 1.)

In three splendid chapters (xii., xiii., xiv.) Job reminds the friends that he can speak as well as they of the power and wisdom of God. But these splendid descriptions of God's marvellous manifestations from them or himself do not meet the needs of the case ; what he desires is to speak *to* God and to receive a response that will still the fever that now consumes his soul.

Man of woman born ;  
Few are his days, and full of restlessness,  
He comes forth like a flow'r, and is mown down ;  
Flees like a passing shadow—makes no stay.  
On such a being openest Thou Thine eye,  
To bring him into judgment with Thyself ?

(xiv. 1-3.)

These quotations give us a fair specimen of the spirit and style of " the great debate " ; it continues through other fifteen chapters, and then Job says, " It is enough, I have had my say " (xxxi. 40). The same subjects are handled in varied forms, the same reproaches bandied to and fro. We are taught implicitly that life's greatest problems are not settled by clever arguments and heated rhetoric. The confusion that comes when, in bitter controversy, hard dogma clashes with personal conviction, is clearly seen. It is evident that there is no solution of the problem on these lines. Eliphaz declares that Job's words can " do no good " because

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it is his sin that rules his mouth (xv. 3, 5). Bildad reaffirms the doctrine that sorrow is the result of sin.

Yet true it holds ; the sinner's light is quenched ;  
And from his fire no kindly spark shall shine.  
(xviii. 5.)

Zophar, with arrogant self-satisfaction, rejoices in  
“ a truth of olden time ” :

How brief the triumph of the bad !  
The joy of the impure how momentary !  
(xx. 5),

and follows it up with an elaborate description of how God suddenly hurls the wicked from splendid prosperity into shameful destruction. Job shows that the facts of life are not all on one side ; a case can be made out by those who maintain that wicked, unscrupulous men are the most successful from the world's point of view. He too can wax eloquent on the greatness of God and find illustrations on one side or the other, but commonplace remarks are helpless in the face of life's greatest mystery. The great thing is for a man to be true to himself, and speak words that correspond to his own conviction.

These lips of mine shall never say the wrong,  
My tongue shall never murmur what is false.  
(xxvii. 4.)

Job's last great speech, xxix., xxx., xxxi., should be read continuously. It describes in vivid style the great contrast between his condition present and past. Then he was prosperous and happy, honoured by honest citizens and feared by evil-doers, his words were regarded as the highest expression of wise counsel and not as signs of irreverence and unbelief. In this speech, specially in xxxi., we have a splendid review of Job's ideal of a righteous man ; the man who is moral as well as religious, who is as careful to abstain from

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immorality as from any trace of superstition, who lives as ever in the sight of a just God. This man's religion is not formal or negative ; he has learned the lesson that God " will have mercy, and not sacrifice " (Hos. vi. 6). The appeal—" are they not our own flesh and blood ?"—which has entered so recently into practical politics is put in powerful form when Job declares that if he had been cruel to the poor he could not expect pity from God.

Who in the womb made me, made He not him ?  
And from one common mother formed us both ?

(xxx. 15.)

C. The Speeches of Elihu (ch. xxxii.—xxxvii.). There is no need to linger over this section of the book ; scholarly opinion has moved steadily in the direction of recognising it as a later addition. When intelligent men to-day can speak of Job's utterances as irreverent and almost blasphemous, we need not be surprised if pious Jews two thousand years ago had something of the same feeling, and if Jewish orthodoxy made a final attempt to tone down this fierce attack on its central dogma. When we conclude this summary we must consider in what sense the book belongs to " the literature of revolt." But we cannot find space to record with any fullness opinions for and against the genuineness of these speeches. They receive no recognition within the book itself ; they are diffuse and marked by a special linguistic character. While the criticism of Job is severe in spirit and bombastic in manner, it is doubtful whether any really new contribution to the discussion is made. Elihu is not mentioned in the prologue or epilogue and is ignored by all the other speakers, so that, for our present purpose, we are justified in following their example.

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D. The Speeches of the Almighty (ch. xxxviii.-xlii. 6). In a critical essay the arguments that have gathered round the genuineness of the two poems (xl. 15-xli. 26), elaborate descriptions of the hippopotamus (Behemoth) and the crocodile (Leviathan), as proof of God's power, would have to be considered. The modern reader may find these passages tedious and tasteless ; on matters of taste, however, argument is proverbially difficult. But passing from the spirited poetic descriptions of the genuine speech to these detailed inventories, one feels a loss of literary quality. They do not increase the strength of this great appeal to the order of the universe. Job is brought face to face with God in Nature, the sphere where His wisdom and power are supremely manifest. Many question she has asked of God ; now he is called to gird up his loins and meet the challenge as to his own knowledge of the vast mysterious world in which man's lot is cast.

Say, where wast thou when earth's deep base I laid ?  
Declare it if thy science goes so far.  
Who fixed its measurements that thou shouldst know,  
Or on it stretched the line ?  
Who laid its corner-stone,  
When morning stars in chorus sang  
And cried aloud for joy, the sons of God ?

(xxxviii. 4-7.)

In this great speech (xxxviii., xxxix.) the descriptions of natural phenomena and animal life are compact, vivid, and powerful ; those of the wild ass and the war-horse have been greatly admired.

Who sent the wild ass free ?  
And loosed the zebra's bands ?  
Whose home the desert I have made,  
The salt and barren waste his haunts.  
'Tis sport to him the city's noise ;  
The driver's ringing shouts, he hears them not.  
The mountain-range his pastures ground ;  
There roams he searching every blade of grass.

(xxxix. 5-8.)

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To the war-horse givest thou his strength ?  
Didst thou with thunder clothe his neck ?  
Or like the locust canst thou make him bound ?  
There is glory in his nostrils—terror there.  
He paws the plain exulting in his might ;  
And thus he goes to meet the armed host,  
He mocks at fear, at panics undismayed,  
He turns not back in presence of the sword.

(xxxix. 19-22.)

On this view, the speech of Jehovah closes at xl. 14, and it is possible that xl. 3-5 should come next and be followed by xlii. 2-6 ; thus the great discussion ends with Job's confession that he is vile, that he has spoken foolishly concerning wonders too great for him, and that in view of this vision of God he repents in dust and ashes.

E. The Epilogue (ch. xlii. 7-17): the conclusion of the popular story of the patient Job, who after having been stripped of all his possessions, as a test of his piety, is finally restored so that his latter end was blessed more than his beginning. The friends are rebuked and their restoration to favour is made dependent on Job's prayers. It has often been felt that this is an artificial and mechanical conclusion to the book in its present form. But it is perfectly natural as the end of a story which, at an earlier time, vindicated the dogma against which the Job of the speeches had to contend, viz. that, in spite of appearances and exceptions, righteousness and prosperity go together. The poet who used the beginning of the story may have kept its end as a concession to the feeling, prevalent in his day and ours, that called for " a happy ending."

*The Book as Literature.*—The selections given for the purpose of showing the structure and contents of the book are, at the same time, illustrations of its high poetic qualities ; but specific remarks need to be made on its artistic and dramatic features. Apart from

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purely theological discussions of inspiration and revelation, the literary appreciation of the Old Testament, begun by the work of such men as Lowth, Goethe, Lessing, and Herder, has increased greatly in our own generation. This book stands in the front rank of the literary achievements of the ancient Hebrews. There are wonderful poems (Isa. v. 1-7) and magnificent passages (Isa. xl.) in the prophetic books, but in Job we have the longest continuous poem, the most sustained effort of artistic genius. Story and poetry were for the Orientals the natural expression of faith and feeling. The poets used effectively the simple form of parallelism, which had come to them from earlier days; rhyme played practically no part; the complicated metres caused by the varied arrangement of long and short syllables had not arisen; the line was complete in itself, and with the accompanying synonymous, contrasted, or supplementary line, formed the couplet. This couplet is the common form, and as it is not dependent for its poetic effect upon rhyme but on rhythm produced by regular beats, it runs well into simple English speech.

Receive instruction from His mouth;  
And treasure up His words within thy heart. (xxii. 22.)

A third line can be added for variety and completeness.

He saith who heareth the words of God,  
Who seeth the vision of the Almighty,  
Falling down, and having his eyes opened.  
(Num. xxiv. 4.)

That night! thick darkness take it for its own.  
In the year's reckoning may it never joy;  
Nor come into the number of the months.  
(iii. 6.)

The Hebrew language, as compared with Greek and Latin, is simple in its structure and limited in its

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vocabulary, not suited to express the subtleties of philosophy or the fine shades of poetic expression ; but with this instrument, remarkable more for strength than delicacy, wonderful results have been achieved. For the purposes of religious poetry and simple oratory it cannot be surpassed. In the Book of Job, the richest specimen of Hebrew poetical literature, it finds full scope.

This book can only be understood when it is assigned to its proper place in the canonical literature and regarded as the most important contribution to what is called "Wisdom literature." Yet it has peculiar features that give it a special character of its own. Besides its length, already noted, there is the combination of narrative and dialogue in prose and poetry, and the extensive use of dramatic dialogue for the sustained discussion of a great theme from a variety of points of view. Traces of these features may be found elsewhere, but in its great design and brilliant execution the Book of Job stands alone among the books of the Old Testament. The word "dramatic" is used, and quite appropriately, though it is a term not easy to define. There is a fair consensus of opinion among scholars that, though the Book of Job is the nearest approach to it, there is no fully developed drama in the Old Testament. That the Song of Songs is a collection of lyrics rather than a drama is now the prevalent view. The fact that the Book of Job could by a little easy manipulation be adapted to the stage and provided with appropriate scenery does not constitute it a real drama in the Greek or modern sense. The Greek drama arose from the ancient religious festivals and the Homeric stories ; in Palestine there was a similar background, but not the same spirit or the same move-

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ment in philosophy and religion. All primitive peoples, and especially Orientals, have in their life artistic instincts and dramatic features. In Israel these are seen in the harvest festivals and wedding feasts, in processions to the sanctuary and responsive songs around the altar. The ancient stories also are picturesque representations of real life, setting forth in dramatic forms the relation of individuals and the conflict of tribes. But the religious movement, specially the strong opposition to images, the fierce struggle against Canaanite superstitions, the prophetic presentation of One supreme righteous God—this varied and persistent effort towards a stern, simple monotheism tended to destroy “art” in the ordinary sense of that word. The heroes of ancient story who might have formed the theme of epic narrative were kept in their subordinate place, as servants and instruments of the Lord of heaven and earth who could have no rival near His throne. Farther the Hebrew mind did not, like the Greek, possess the power to pursue subtle speculations as to nature and fate. What we have to call “the philosophy” of the Hebrews was simple, direct, and practical; actual conduct rather than abstract thought was its chief concern. Hence we can understand how it was that while there was at the beginning a favourable soil and some of the conditions for its growth, the drama did not attain its full stature among them.

The author of the Book of Job had real dramatic genius, and, considering his time and circumstances, displayed great skill in handling his material. Things that we are accustomed to expect in the best literature had to be learned slowly even by men who possessed the indefinable thing that we call “genius.” For example, we do not find any very clear and deep dis-

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inction between the three "characters," Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, or in their handling of the same orthodox view of sin and suffering. Eliphaz is an old man and approaches his task, at first, with gentleness; Bildad is middle-aged and delights in the common sense and average experience that expresses itself in popular proverbs. Zophar, being younger, is more impetuous, he is rough and overbearing as well as dogmatic. There is an attempt at characterisation and delineation, but considering the ability of the author it is not far advanced. It was only slowly that the Greek dramatists learned the difficult art of giving an appearance of real individuality to their personages. The author places the scene in the East and in early times, and until all its references and allusions were carefully examined and its relation to the literature and thought of earlier and later periods investigated there was little hesitation in accepting it as a work of the patriarchal period.

The greatest evidence of the writer's intellectual and spiritual power is the creation of the Job of the speeches, into whose personality he pours his own sublimest thoughts and deepest feelings. Job humiliated and scorned, put to shame and driven to despair, is a splendid figure revolting against the world's narrow judgments and persistently making his appeal to God. The reproaches of the men from whom he expected sympathy irritate him, but he is clear that his real trouble comes from his failure to understand God's treatment of him.

If still against me ye exalt yourselves,  
And plead against me my reproach,  
Then be assured that God hath cast me down,  
'Tis He that overspreads me with His net.

(xix. 5, 6.)

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On this constant theme a wonderful variety of changes are rung, indignation, scorn, regret, vexation, shame, hope, faith, fear, despair—all find appropriate and energetic expression. There is no shallow rhetoric ; an intense feeling of sincerity and reality pulses through all these speeches.

*The Problem of Sin and Suffering.*—We can see now that this subject has a history in the Old Testament, that is, that in different periods of the nation's life it was approached from different points of view. If we go far enough back we may come to a time when the world was full of gods and demons and it was difficult to get any reasonable account of the cause or meaning of events. Men could see a certain steadiness in the seasons of the year, when there was little order elsewhere ; but even there an unusually prolonged drought meant famine, regarded as a curse from heaven (2 Sam. xxi.). It was *an advance* when men came to look upon sorrow as a punishment for sin. Neglect of God's law brings its punishment ; that may be interpreted in a crude superstitious way or with breadth and intelligence. There is a great truth in it capable of corporate and personal application. The predictions made by the great prophets of national disasters on account of the prevalence of vice and injustice were abundantly fulfilled. The terrible misfortunes that came upon Samaria and Jerusalem drove this lesson of retribution deep into the minds and hearts of the people (Zech. i. 4-6). By the rivers of Babylon and amid the ruins of Jerusalem the people confessed that the sins of their fathers had received just punishment. The everlasting lesson that righteousness exalteth a nation and injustice is a disgrace to any people was written through blood and tears in the history of this

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small people. When we say that the nation is happy that has no history we must remember that we are speaking of a happiness that has little to do with greatness. In the earlier days the subject was considered from the standpoint of the community ; that the individual, innocent or guilty, should be involved in the fate of the community seemed natural. The despotic view of God was also accepted with reverence or sullen submission (1 Sam. iii.). In later times there is a growing belief that God must be reasonable as well as powerful, and the claims of human personality come into prominence. (The two important passages Jer. xx. 14-18 and Job iii. 3-10 should be compared, and Job's bitter allusion to Ps. viii. 4 in vii. 17.).

*The Way of Escape.*—When through national catastrophes and unjust governments men began to feel that the foundations of society were insecure and that diligence and honesty were no guarantees of peace and prosperity, then there were two ways along which the thoughts of men who still maintained their faith in God could turn for relief. One of them, the hope of a new era of peace and happiness for all the saints by the supernatural establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, does not play any real part in the Book of Job. The promises in which he is expected to find consolation are that on condition of repentance and confession a man may find restoration so as to live to his full term and then go down to the grave in peace.

Then shall thou learn how numerous thy seed,  
Thine offspring as the earth's green growing herb,  
And thou thyself, in ripened age, into the grave shall come,  
As sheaf that in its season to the garner mounts.

(v. 26.)

The other, the hope of personal immortality, which through various reasons and influences was beginning

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to work its way into the life of the Hebrew people, appears in the speeches of Job as a feeble, fluctuating, and uncertain hope. At times Job's faith pierces through the darkness and cherishes the thought that God's purpose may include the underworld, the shadowy realm of Sheol, and may find a kindly expression even there :

Ah ! is it so ? When man dies, does he live again ?  
Then all the days appointed me I'll wait,  
Till my reviving come.  
Then thou wilt call, and I will answer thee,  
For Thou wilt yearn towards Thy handiwork.

(xiv. 14f.).

Job believes that even when he goes to that place whence there is no return God will somehow be his witness, defending his honour if not his life (xvi. 19), but the hope of survival after death never attains sufficient clearness to mitigate sensibly the hardness of his problem. Unfortunately the great passage xix. 25, " But I know that my Redeemer (Vindicator) liveth," etc., has so many textual problems and has called forth such varied interpretations that its testimony cannot be used on this point with any confidence. There has been found in it a definite doctrine of bodily resurrection, but it is possible that it may contain only the vague hope that even after death he may know that the controversy as to his substantial righteousness has been decided in his favour. Evidently such uncertain conjectures could, while throwing light on his ever-changing moods, have no great influence on the course of the argument.

*Job's Great Battle.*—As we watch these changing moods of the great poet and feel that they show even more than his strong arguments the intensity, sincerity, and, at times, the violence of his emotions, we are forced

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to the conclusion that this is no mere "academic" discussion, but the expression of a strong man's view of the oppressive facts of life. It has been called a "didactic poem," but the man seeks to relieve his own soul rather than to teach a specific theory or propagate a particular faith. He has no vain ambition "to crush this sorry scheme of things and mould it more unto *his* heart's desire." True, he was burdened by the order of things as it appeared to him, but it was a question not of an abstract scheme: all his thought and speech implies the lofty monotheism attained by his people; it was an affair of the relation of a living man to a living personal God. In this situation the words of our own poet would be quite appropriate:

And fall with all my weight of cares,  
Upon the great world's altar stairs,  
That slope through darkness up to God.

He speaks much about the darkness, and while his path is beset by mystery he still clings to the belief that behind the darkness there is God. To such a man, blank atheism, shallow agnosticism, or coarse materialism is impossible; in one sense we may say that the intensity of his faith is the measure of his doubt. To the friends the question is much smaller; they are sure of themselves and equally sure that they understand the methods of God's government. The questions dealt with are of universal interest and application, and, considering that this discussion comes to us from a time and a race so different from our own, it is wonderful that it comes so close to our souls in times of perplexity. The following words, by a man of our own time who has entered most fully into the life intellectual and spiritual of the Semitic peoples, are appropriate at this stage. They apply especially to

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"the friends" with their rigid definitions and hard, inflexible outlines. "To try and solve their riddle many of us have gone far into their society, and seen the clear hardness of their belief, a limitation, almost mathematical, which repels us by its unsympathetic form. Semites have no half-tones in their register of vision. They are a people of primary colours, especially of black and white, who see the world always in line. They are a certain people, despising doubt, our modern crown of thorns. They do not understand our metaphysical difficulties, our self-questionings. They know only truth and untruth, belief and unbelief, without our hesitating retinue of finer shades." "Their thoughts lie easiest among extremes. They inhabit superlatives by choice. Sometimes the great inconsistencies seem to possess them jointly. They exclude compromise, and pursue the logic of their ideas to its absurd ends, without seeing incongruity in their opposed conclusions."<sup>1</sup>

Incidentally we learn much from the speeches of Job concerning the life and thought of the time, but the purpose of the writer was not directly "to justify the ways of God to men," but to vindicate his own liberty of thought and maintain his loyalty to truth and God. Such a spirit and example may be as important as and more influential than formal teaching.

*His Victory and his Danger.*—As we have seen, the result of the sharp sustained controversy was an increase of bitterness and misunderstanding; Job and his critics are driven constantly farther apart; any chance of reconciling such divergent views is more hopeless at the end than the beginning. The popular story (xlii. 8) gives Job the right as against his friends,

<sup>1</sup> Colonel T. E. Lawrence.

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but that is a small matter. Job's greatest danger was not that of losing his temper, of being irritated by the lack of justice and charity on the part of his friends ; it was that he would become dominated by a false thought of God and thus think of Him as an arbitrary, brutal King who, having created sensitive creatures, delighted in tormenting them : " Therefore it is I tremble so before Him ; I think of Him, and I am sore afraid " (xxiii. 15). No specific reply can meet such a feverish condition, and if Job does not gain for himself or the world a complete solution of a difficult, ever-changing problem, he does by a thorough criticism of the rigid doctrine of retribution prepare the way for a larger faith. His protest against making *sin* the explanation of all suffering was effective and enduring. This word is not a dead theological term ; it has real religious value ; it affirms a relation not merely between man and society, but between a man and his God. This is personal, mystic, secret ; through this conception the Old Testament saints have deepened the religious life of the world. But Job teaches us that no one key unlocks all doors, no one idea solves all mysteries ; a great truth which has justice at the heart of it may, through too much logic, become false and cruel in its application to individual cases. Job was not the first nor the last to be the victim of a relentless logic which worships abstract theories and ignores the complexity of human life.

*The Significance of the Book.*—This is the final question to which all previous considerations lead : What is the significance of the fact that this book, with its defiance of conventional criticism and its passionate appeal for justice, forms part of our sacred literature ? If it does not give a complete and final answer to the

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problem of suffering, what service does it render? It is possible to arrange a list of explanations stated or suggested in the course of the story and the argument. Suffering may test the nature of a man's religion and show whether it is sufficiently disinterested to stand the storm; it may be the punishment that invariably follows the breaking of God's law; it is meant as a warning which should lead to repentance and amendment; it is a mystery beyond the powers of our limited thought, "When I thought how I might know this, it was too painful for me" (Ps. lxxiii); our proper attitude towards it is not sullen despair or wild defiance, but patient submission: all these suggestions may be found in the book. But when we have made a formal catalogue of them we have not necessarily caught the spirit of the book any more than a pile of lumber represents a living forest.

If the author had given us a formal solution, even if it could have met the needs of his own generation, it would long ago have been out of date. But because he has given us his own great soul, his gift is not for an age, but for all time. He acknowledges that in the presence of the Divine Vision he feels his own vileness, that he has been reckless in his speech, that he has been too prone to make man's mind the measure of God's thought. This is submission sincere and complete, but it is not abject; it is before God, not man or man's creed, that he humbles himself in the dust.

The splendour of his descriptions of God's power and wisdom in Nature is not gratuitous eloquence, it is a real element in the case; it shows that he has found relief in escaping from the close atmosphere of self into a larger world in which he now becomes a part. He does not discuss such questions as matters of phil-

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osophy and say in cold prosaic tones that "man is not the centre of the world," but he indirectly exults in his own freedom in catching a nobler vision and soaring beyond the barriers of barren theological discussion. To inspire men with thoughts of this kind that they can apply in their own way is a nobler thing than the invention of any narrow formula.

The keynote we find in one of the most striking passages of the whole poem :

Again, to-day, my plaint—rebellious still ;  
His hand upon me heavier than my moans.  
Oh that I knew where I might find Him—knew  
How I might come, even to His judgment-seat.  
There would I set my cause before His face ;  
There would I fill my mouth with arguments ;  
Would know the words that He would answer me,  
And mark what He would say.

(xxiii. 2-5.)

Two things stand out here with impressive clearness. The pathetic situation of the man who, in the meantime, has lost hold of God. "Oh that I knew where I might find Him !" In his own way and after a fierce struggle he did find, not complete intellectual satisfaction, but a real relationship to God. He found that for himself and, so far as one man's life can help another, for his fellow-men. And second, the boldness of the demand, the appeal from the judgments of men to the Divine tribunal. This claim for the freedom of the soul to express its deepest feelings, its most ardent longings ; this belief, now more fully recognised, that repression, carried too far, may mean death, not life :—this is the heroic mood that places Job in the ranks of those who have fought the great battles for faith and freedom ; this firm belief that the final appeal must ever be to the throne of the living God.

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## BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY

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### BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Lange's *Commentary* (O. Zöckler), American edition, New York, 1874. An elaborate critical exegetical commentary, representing the conservative point of view, defending the unity of the book and ascribing it to the Solomonic age.

*The International Critical Commentary*, by S. R. Driver and G. B. Gray (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1921). This is a very thorough piece of work by two men who until recently were in the front rank of English scholars. Vol. I has an introduction, a new translation, and a commentary. Vol. II (pp. 350) consists entirely of "Philological Notes." It finds many later additions, including the Poem on Wisdom and the Elihu speeches, but retains the prologue and epilogue as, in a real sense, original elements.

*The Book of Job*, by Moses Bottenwieser (Macmillan Co., New York, 1922 : pp. 370). This volume is written by a Jewish scholar of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati ; it contains the text in Hebrew with a number of transpositions, a translation and exposition. The author defends the originality of the prologue, rejects the Elihu speeches, the description of "the happy ending" in the last seven verses, and regards 400 B.C. as "the approximate date."

"The Book of Job" in *The Expositor's Bible*, by Dr. Watson (Hodder & Stoughton, 1892). An interesting review of the contents and teaching of the book. The Elihu speeches are regarded as secondary.

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“ Job ” in *The Cambridge Bible* (1886), by Dr. A. B. Davidson. A careful piece of work by one of the ablest scholars of the last generation.

*The Book of Job*, by Dr. Bradley, then Dean of Westminster (Cambridge University, 1888). Twelve lectures in which the various problems are discussed and fruitful suggestions given for the interpretation of this great poem.

*The Book of Job : its Origin, Growth, and Interpretation*, by Dr. Morris Jastrow, Jr. (J. B. Lippincott Co., 1920 : pp. 368), contains an interesting discussion of the various problems, gives a new translation with searching analysis of the book and examination of the text. He finds a number of later insertions in addition to the Elihu section, and regards the book as “ a gradual growth,” “ not to the same degree as the Pentateuch, but of the same order.”

*The Book of Job*, interpreted by J. Strahan (T. & T. Clark, 1913). A very careful piece of work by one who has studied the German and other recent commentaries. A good handbook for students.

Among the smaller commentaries by competent scholars we may mention those of A. S. Peake (*New Century Bible*, 1905), G. A. Barton (Macmillan, N.Y., 1921), and W. E. Addis (Dent's *Temple Bible*).

For a presentation of the general subject see *The Problem of Suffering*, by A. S. Peake (Primitive Methodist Publishing House), and *The Problem of Pain*, by J. E. McFadyen (James Clarke & Co.).



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